



THE HERMENEUTICS OF THE ARABIAN SŪQ

A Phenomenological Reading of the Thoroughfare Market Street's Socio-Urban Development in Arabia from the Pre-Islamic Era to Present

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Abstract

The research intends to offer a philosophical hermeneutic reading of the Arabian Sūq, considered a principal urban constituent of almost all Arab cities. The relevance of such a study is hinged on two observations relating to the bulk of reviewed literature. The first is concerned with some current presuppositions that confine the Arabian Sūq's development to that of an Islamic city, minimizing its role in shaping the Pre-Islamic Arabian world. The second is related to the employed methods, most of which marginalize the value of Arab poetics as a tool for understanding the Arabian Sūq's socio-urban experiences. Accordingly, the research examines the different patterns and structures of an Arabian Sūq's lived experience at three historical instances—Pre-Islamic, Islamic and Post-Islamic, to identify whether and why its socially-constructed and/or poetic meaning has changed over time. Deploying Hans Georg Gadamer's interpretive tools of the Hermeneutic Circle and Fusion of Horizons, this historical investigation intends then to compare 'what is seen' against 'what is said,' using a range of multidisciplinary evidences that are extracted from the region's poetic heritage (poetry, literature, travel journals and philosophy), cultural products (architecture, sculpture, illuminated manuscripts and puppet shows) and everyday dialogues (interviews, social survey and anecdotes). By doing so, the research attempts to discover something new about Arabian Sūqs through its own dwellers' 'in-time' experiences, descriptions and stories. The research concludes that despite the persistence of some particular spatial references, such as the *fadaā/ tareeq* duality, in the perception and experience of Arabian Sūqs, the understanding of Sūq-ness today points to some dialectic tensions relating to an Arab's relationship to modernity, tradition and progress. The methodological application of this 'new' approach for investigating Arabian socio-urban relations substantiates the research's contribution to knowledge, positioning it within the larger sphere of current theoretical discourses (phenomenologist, situationist and semiotic) that emphasize the importance of lived experiences—everyday practices—and poetics as key sources for understanding socio-urban phenomena.

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The definitions provided in this glossary are derived from the official website of the Arabic Dictionary *Al-Mu'jam al-Waseet*, while the translation is proposed by the author. The online version can be accessed on,

https://www.almaany.com/appendix.php?language=arabic&category=%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%AC%D9%85+%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%88%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%B7&lang_name=%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A8%D9%8A



Glossary

Allah (الله)	<i>Lafth al-Jalalah</i> (لفظ الجلالة), or the Word of Majesty, referring to God. <i>Allah</i> is an Islamic term denoting the only One Divine Creator, parallel to the term <i>al-Rabb</i> (الرب) employed in Arabic Judeo-Christian text.
Al- (ال)	Arabic definite article, meaning ‘The,’ attached at the beginning of Arabic words, where the subject or object in question is known and clearly defined. For example, the word ‘book’ in Arabic is called both <i>Kitab</i> and <i>al-Kitab</i> , with the former denoting any book while the latter specifying a particular book.
Arajouz (أراجوز)	Noun, referring to a traditional puppet show conducted in the older streets of Egypt with the aid a portable theatre. The origin of the term is debatable.
Bayt (البيت)	Noun, meaning the house. The use of the definite article transforms the signification of this term from denoting any house to a sacred symbol, referring to ‘The House of God’ or <i>Kaaba</i> . It is usually accompanied by the adjective ‘ <i>al-haram</i> ’ to accentuate its sanctity.
Akaza (عكظ)	Predicate, meaning to fight and conquer another by piercing his pride through wisdom, self-praise or disdain.
Al-Sirat al-Mustaqeem (الصراط المستقيم)	Noun, meaning the righteousness path, an Islamic concept denoting the right way of doing things or the way leading to paradise. It is employed heavily in the <i>Quran</i> and Islamic Jurisprudence.
Balagha’h (بلاغة)	Noun, meaning the mastery of Arabic language or eloquence. Also, used in Literary Criticism to explore and explain poetic or literary richness, abundance in imagery, as well as original composition or deployment of Arabic poetic meters.
Djinn (الجن)	Noun, given to some invisible creatures described in the <i>Arabian Nights</i> and in the <i>Quran</i> . Djinn are believed to be made from fire and to possess supernatural powers.

Fadaā (فضاء)	Noun, meaning an expansive space that fills the area between earth and the sky or large stretches of ground. From root ‘ <i>afda</i> ’ (أفضى), whose multiple definitions include reaching a destination, confining a secret or consummating a marriage. This is a critical term used heavily in this dissertation to explain the Arabian understanding of being-in-the-world. It is used here in conjunction with the positive qualities of the void. So, it is not a vacuum devoid of meaning but a potential space of meaningful lived events.
Faragh (فراغ)	Noun, meaning emptiness or vacuum. The term is used in this dissertation to show that the Arabic employment of the term void has more than one meaning, including complete emptiness as in <i>faragh</i> , or expansiveness as in <i>fadaā</i> .
Firdaws (فردوس)	Noun, referring to an Islamic term given to the highest level in paradise.
Fotouwa (فتوة)	Noun from the root fata (فتى), referring to strong man, who was considered the protector of a district, tribe or community. The role of the <i>fotouwa</i> during the 19 th and 20 th century, as described in many folk tales and media productions, took a political turn, where he was officially appointed to collect taxes and keep peace in his district, acting as a quasi-police representative.
Ghoul (غول)	Noun, given to some supernatural creatures described in the <i>Arabian Nights</i> , and believed to be harmful, strong and large.
Hadar (حضر)	Noun, meaning urbanized or civilized as opposed to rural. Related nouns are ‘ <i>hadarah</i> ’ (حضارة) meaning civilization.
Hadith (حديث)	Noun, meaning a conversation or talking. Here, it refers to the totality of Prophet Mohammed’s (PBHU) sayings that have been collected and catalogued in the main Sunni transcripts of al-Bukhari, Muslim, al-Tirmidhi, al-Tabari and Ibn-Majah, in addition to the works of al-Shafei, Malik, Ibn Hanbal and Abu Hanifa, culminating into what is known as the Science of Hadith and Islamic Jurisprudence.
Hajj (حج)	Noun, meaning pilgrimage to Mecca in the Islamic sense. The dissertation discusses the rituals of <i>Hajj</i> and

	explores how these rituals were present and practiced widely before Islam, as confirmed through Pre-Islamic poetry.
Halal (حلال)	Noun, referring to an Islamic concept that institutionalizes and allows the use of something or the conduction of certain activities under Islamic law.
Hammam (حمام)	Noun, a term used to denote a traditional bath structure.
Haram (حرام)	Noun, referring to an Islamic concept that forbids the use of something or the conduction of certain activities under Islamic law.
Harem (حرم)	Noun, meaning a sanctuary. The term is used to describe different private areas, used mainly by females, or to denote sacred buildings and the interiors of mosques.
Jahannam (جهنم)	Noun, Quranic term referring to hell.
Jahiliyyah (جاهلية)	Noun, meaning ignorance, from the root ' <i>Jahl</i> ' (جهل) or not knowing. This is originally an Islamic term referring to the period before the coming of Islam. The use of the term in this dissertation intends to reveal one of the many prejudices encircling our current understanding of Arabian culture and its tradition prior to Islam.
Jannah (جنة)	Noun, meaning paradise or concealed garden. This is a major Islamic concept that played a critical role in shaping Islamic Arabia's urban practices.
Khitat (خطاط)	Noun, meaning to map, plan or trace. From the root <i>khatta</i> (خط). The term is used to denote urban planning strategies in Islamic Arabia.
Madrasa (مدرسة)	Noun, meaning school.
Mashrabeya (مشربية)	Noun, meaning wooden latticework cover for windows. The term is commonly used to describe a recurrent type in Islamic architectural articulation.
Mu'alakat (معلقات)	Noun, referring to the ten most celebrated poems of Pre-Islamic Arabia. The name is derived from the root ' <i>allaka</i> ' (علق) meaning to hang, pointing at the Pre-Islamic tradition of hanging the most masterful poetic compositions on the doors of the Kaaba, which was

considered one of the holiest spots in Arabia prior and after the coming of Islam. The choice of these pieces was decided after some major poetry battles that took place during seasonal Sūq festivals, specifically that of *Okaz*.

Munadi (منادي)	Noun, meaning a person who performs the act of calling out loud, hence a caller from the root ‘ <i>nāda</i> ’ (نادى). The term is used in this dissertation to describe a particular type of job that prevailed in Arabia, probably also in the whole known world during the ancient and Medieval times, to announce royal and official state decrees.
Munshid (منشد)	Noun, meaning a person who performs the act of chanting religious songs. Term derived from the root ‘ <i>anshada</i> ’ (أنشد).
Muqarnas (مقرنص)	Noun, referring to a pioneering Islamic decorative structure that was first created and used during the Abbasid era.
Najess (نجس)	Adjective, meaning polluted or religiously tabooed. Related words include ‘ <i>najassah</i> .’
Qafiya (قافية)	Noun, referring to the repeated last letters in classic Arabic poetry. Plural form ‘ <i>qawafi</i> ’ (قوافي).
Qaiçaria (قيصرية)	Noun, denoting a market structure that is inspired from Roman types. The term is used in this dissertation to differentiate between different urban phenomena in Arabia.
Sāqa (ساق)	Predicate, meaning to bring something to someone or somewhere. The term is also the root for the noun ‘ <i>Sāq</i> ,’ meaning leg, hence, to walk on legs. The term is used in this dissertation to clarify the original meaning of the term Sūq.
Taher (طاهر)	Adjective, meaning clean and pure, hence religiously allowed. Related words include ‘ <i>taharah</i> .’
Tajalli (تجالي)	Predicate, derived from the root ‘ <i>jalla</i> ’ (جلى), meaning to reveal something. The term is heavily used throughout the dissertation in relation to its Sufist interpretation in the works of Ibn Arabi.
Tamseer (تمصير)	Noun, from root ‘ <i>massara</i> ’ (مصر), meaning to urbanize.

Tareeq (طريق)	Noun, referring to a walkway, street or path. This is a critical term used heavily in this dissertation to explain the Arabian understanding of being-in-the-world. It is used in conjunction with the term <i>fadaā</i> , forming together a dialectic duality in Arabia's experience of space.
Wahm (وهم)	Noun, meaning a distorted cognition of events or objects. The term is heavily used throughout the dissertation based on its definition and explanation in the works of Avicenna.
Watan (وطن)	Noun, meaning homeland or country.
Zikr (ذكر)	Noun, meaning to remember or to say a prayer, from the root 'zakara' (ذَكَرَ). The term is used here to describe a religious performance usually conducted during Islamic festivals throughout Arabian Sūqs, where large groups of people, especially Sufists, gather in concentric circles around a <i>munshid</i> to sing, pray and dance.



الأعمال

1

Chapter One

Introduction

The Arabian Sūq: A Problem, A Subject, A ‘Method’

1.1 Introduction

The following research attempts to offer an alternative reading of the Arabian thoroughfare market street, or Sūq, studied here for its socio-urban relevance as a principal component of most Arab cities. To do so, the thesis explores a multidisciplinary range of evidence, like urban maps, architectural buildings, poetry, novels and interviews, to test the possibility that there exist some persistent cultural meanings that seem to have shaped an Arab’s understanding and experience of the Sūq at different historical situations. By doing so, the thesis proposes a ‘new’ approach for understanding the Sūq’s socio-urban development, by means of cross-examining the space’s physical development against the different structures and patterns of daily lived experiences that seem to have consolidated its poetic relevance and cultural memory at three distinct historical moments.

This chapter introduces the subject and the different approaches sought for answering the research's main questions. First, the chapter identifies some of the problems in existing literature on Arab cities and then defines the scope of the project, its aim and objectives. This is followed by a brief exploration of the research's proposed theoretical framework and methodology, relating them to the shortcomings of existing methods. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the research's scope, limitations and delimitations.

1.2 Background of the Problem

The value of the Arabian Sūq, as the research's main subject, is hinged on two observations relating to the study of Arab cities today. First is the marginalization of Arabia's history prior to the coming of Islam, suggesting the confinement of the region's socio-urban history to its Islamic period alone. Second is the reliance on physical evidence for explaining the urban morphology of Arab cities, neglecting the importance of poetics as imperative sources of knowledge of the region. While the disregard of the Pre-Islamic Arabian period is attributed by some historians, like Robert Hoyland and Taha Hussein, to a dearth in Pre-Islamic Arabian documentation and to some Orthodox Islamic biases against the period's polytheistic practices (section 4.3 and 5.2), current studies, including those of Edward Said, Janet Abu-Lughod and Mohammed Gharipour, believe that Arabia's stereotypical Islamic image was established through some 19th century Orientalist discourses.¹ Later Orientalists' studies, like those of Gustave von Grunebaum, Albert Hourani and Ira M. Lapidus (section 4.3), redefined these initial discourses, resulting in further debates regarding the urban rationality of the Islamic city, whose 'chaotic' layout and 'unidentified' governance structure seemed to differ substantially from their 'organized'

¹ Robert Hoyland, *Arabia and the Arabs: From the Bronze Age to the Coming of Islam* (London: Routledge, 2002); Taha Hussein, *Fil-Adab al-Jaheli* (في الشعر الجاهلي), Arabic (Soussa: Dar al-Ma'aref, 1927); Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1978), 310-312; Janet Abu-Lughod, "The Islamic City – Historic Myth, Islamic Essence, and Contemporary Relevance," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 19 (1987): 155-176; Mohammed Gharipour, "The Culture and Politics of Commerce: The Bazaar in the Islamic City," in *The Bazaar in the Islamic City: Design, Culture, and History*, edited by Mohammad Gharipour, 1-50 (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2012).

Western counterparts.² Since many such Orientalist views were criticized for their Eurocentric approach (section 4.3), current revisionist scholars, such as Stephano Bianca, Nizar Alsayyad, Nasser O. Rabbat and Yasser Elsheshtawy attempt to re-investigate the urban logic of Islamic towns, questioning the Arab city's historic foundation and whether there is such thing as an Islamic City.³ This enquiry is explored by Alsayyad, when he reverses the Orientalist paradigm by looking into "what the Muslims originally wanted of their cities and... [how] Muslim cities turned out to be."⁴ Alsayyad's transhistorical analysis explains that the design of many medieval Islamic cities reflected the will and aspirations of their individual rulers, while socio-urban relations developed according to these towns' cultural and scientific changes over time. His more extensive work on Cairo develops these ideas, arguing that the city has not one but many histories, each of which must be understood in its apposite temporal, geo-political, technological and socio-cultural context.⁵ Another view is forwarded by Stephano Bianca, who opposes the idea that 'there is no such thing as Islamic Architecture,' claiming that since its early history, which he dates to the 9th century AD, there exists a very distinctive Islamic practice that adapts earlier architectural types according to regional "customs, patterns of use and corresponding structuring principles."⁶ While Alsayyad and Bianca share a similar empirical approach for investigating the historical development of Arab Muslim towns, Alsayyad's work, particularly in Cairo, portrays "the fundamental belief that the institutional structure of a society, based on who governs it and how, is often reflected in the places this

² Gustave von Grunebaum, "The Structure of the Muslim Town (1955)," in *Islam: Essays in the Nature and Growth of a Cultural Tradition*, (London: Routledge, 1961), 141-158; Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991); Ira M. Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge Uni. Press, 2002).

³ Stephano Bianca, *Urban Form in the Arab World: Past and Present* (Zurich: VDF, 2000); Nizar Alsayyad, *Cities and Caliphs: On the Genesis of Arab Muslim Urbanism* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991); Nasser Rabbat, "Ideal-type and Urban History: The Development of the Suq in Damascus," in *The Bazaar in the Islamic City: Design, Culture and History*, edited by Mohammad Gharipour (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2012); Yasser Elsheshtawy, *The Evolving Arab City: Tradition, Modernity and Urban Development* (New York: Routledge, 2008).

⁴ Alsayyad, *Cities and Caliphs*, 41.

⁵ Nizar Alsayyad, *Cairo: Histories of a City* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011).

⁶ Bianca, *Urban Form in the Arab World*, 2.

society produces.”⁷ This argument finds a reverberating echo in Rabbat’s work, when he criticizes some current urban developments in the region, arguing that their Romantic, yet inaccurate, depiction of Islamic towns “perpetuates the generalizations and exaggerations of its erstwhile model but does so with the absence of both the social restrictions and the legal framework that theoretically engendered it in the first place.”⁸ The works of Elsheshtawy, as shall be reviewed in chapter 7, extends these arguments to include the effects of globalization on Arabia’s socio-urban practices today.⁹

One problem in many Orientalist and revisionist studies, like those of Bianca and Hourani, lies in these works’ claim of tracing the historical development of ‘Arab peoples,’ while in effect they only explore these peoples’ Muslim antecedents and not their Pre-Islamic ones. For, Bianca believes Islam to be the region’s primary unifying factor and the catalyst for many of its socio-urban practices, a proposition that probably explains why he was unable to locate any substantial architectural innovation in the Arab region prior to the 9th century AD.¹⁰ Contrastingly, Hourani makes an important distinction between the Arab-speaking parts of the Islamic world and its non-Arab speaking counterparts, suggesting that Arabic language played a big role in creating some affinity between the region’s diverse ethnic groups, like Berber, Levantine, Nubian and African.¹¹ These two views uncover a critical issue concerning the historical contextualization of Arab cities in many Orientalist and revisionist discourses, like those of Bianca and Hourani, who seem to transpose the region’s present’ geo-political and cultural situation onto a distant Islamic past, suggesting that the geographic boundaries of what is referred to as the ‘Arab World’ today remained unchanged from the 7th century AD. Similar to the earlier works of William and Georges Marçais, they also falsely imply a rather even application of Islam’s religious beliefs and socio-urban practices across the Islamic empire’s amalgam

⁷ Alsayyad, *Cairo*, xvi.

⁸ Nasser Rabbat, “Ideal-type and Urban History,” 52.

⁹ Elsheshtawy, *The Evolving Arab City*, 1; Bianca, *Urban Form in the Arab World*, 140-150; Rabbat, “Ideal-type and Urban History,” 53.

¹⁰ Bianca, *Urban Form in the Arab World*, 9.

¹¹ Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples*, 1.

of cultural and ethnic groups.¹² Moreover, few of these studies examined the effects of Arabic language and its poetics on the region's socio-urban relations, ignoring that, similar to Islam, Arabic language was also introduced to many parts of what we currently refer to as the 'Arab World,' like Egypt, Northern Africa and the Levant, after the Islamic conquests.¹³ Even though the linguistic shift from regional languages to Arabic is traced in the works of Philip Hitti, Anwar Chejne and Sharron Gu, the effects of this linguistic turn is seldom examined in the field of Islamic or Arab urbanism.¹⁴ For this reason, the thesis aspires to formulate one possible methodological process that can assist in bridging the gap between various historical situations of Arab-ness and in identifying some linguistic meanings that seem to have shaped the region's understanding and experience of Sūq-ness at each of these situations. By doing so, the research intends to build on Alsayyad's argument that there is not only one history of the Arab region but rather many overlapping histories, whose fragments can be traced through architecture and historical records, as much as through poetry, novels, everyday dialogues, myths, folktales and rituals.¹⁵

Accordingly, the choice of the Sūq as this research's subject is hinged on two reasons. First is the limited number of studies that are chiefly dedicated to the Arabian Sūq's socio-urban development (section 1.4), granting the research the possibility of presenting an original contribution to knowledge in this area. Second is the space's repeated employment in the region's cultural products, like poetry, novels, movies and even puppet shows, attesting to its importance as a setting of some particularly Arabian socio-urban relations. By looking into the different structures and patterns of meanings embodied in some of these cultural

¹² William Marçais, "L'Islamisme et la Vie Urbaine," reprinted in *Articles et Conférences* (Paris: Publication de l'Institut d'Études Orientales, Faculté des Lettres d'Alger, 1961); Georges Marçais, "L'Urbanisme Musulman," reprinted in *Mélanges d'Histoire et d'Archéologie de l'Occident Musulman* (Algiers, 1957).

¹³ Anwar G. Chejne, *The Arabic Language: Its Role in History* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1969), 59.

¹⁴ Philip K. Hitti, *History of the Arabs: From the Earliest Times to the Present*, 10th ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002); Chejne, *The Arabic Language* (1969); Sharron Gu, *A Cultural History of the Arabic Language* (North Carolina: McFarland & Company Inc., 2014).

¹⁵ Alsayyad, *Cairo*, xiv-xv.

products, the research aspires to discover something new about the Sūq. To do so, the research divides its investigation into three distinct historical parts: 1) Pre-Islamic, which denotes the emergence of the first Arabian settlements in Yemen around 1200BC until Prophet Mohammed's (PBUH) migration to Medina around 622AD; 2) Islamic, which refers to the period from the establishment of the first Islamic Dynasty (661AD) until the fall of the Ottoman Empire (1923AD), focusing on the space's socio-urban development during the reign of the Arabian dynasties of the Umayyads, Abbasids and Fatimids; and 3) Post-Islamic, which describes the period from the fall of the Ottomans in 1923AD to the present.

Assuming that each of these historical situations played a significant role in defining an Arab's perception and experience of the Sūq, the research relies on geographic maps to define the physical boundaries of each period and on some contemporaneous historical records to define and describe the Arab situation then. These records include the works of Herodotus, Strabo and Diodorus to describe Pre-Islamic Arab-ness (section 5.2);¹⁶ the travellers' journals of *Ibn Jubayr* (1145-1217), *al-Ya'qubi* (died 897 AD), *al-Hamawi* (1179–1229) and *al-Maqrizi* (1364-1442) to look into the patterns and structures of Islamic Arab-ness (section 6.3);¹⁷ and the manifestoes of some contemporary movements, like Pan-Arabism and Islamism, to enquire whether and how Post-Islamic Arab-ness denotes “a person whose language is Arabic, who lives in an Arabic country, and who is in sympathy with the aspirations of the Arabic people.” (section 7.2).¹⁸ Here, the research borrows the term ‘Post-Islamic’ from Gu's work, which employs the term to describe the linguistic development of Arabic poetry during the 20th

¹⁶ Herodotus, *The Histories of Herodotus* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1898); Diodorus Siculus, “The Library of History, Vol. II: Loeb Classical Library Edition, 1935,” under *Bill Thayer's Website*, http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/e/roman/texts/diodorus_siculus/2b*.html (accessed February 7, 2017); Strabo, *The Geography of Strabo: Literally Translated*, with Notes, trans. by H. C. Hamilton and W. Falconer (London: H. G. Bohn, 1854-1857).

¹⁷ Ibn Jubayr, *Travels of Ibn Jubayr*, edited by William Wright (Leyden: E.J. Brill, 1907); Al-Ya'qubi, *Al-buldan* (البلدان), Arabic, edited by Mohammed Amin Danawy (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al- 'Ilmiyah, 1984); Yaqt Al-Hamawi, *Mu'jam al-buldan* (معجم البلدان), Arabic (Beirut: Dar Sader, 1977); Al-Maqrizi, *Al-Mawa'edh wal i'tibar bi thikr al-khitat wal athar, or Al-khitat al-Maqriziyah* (المواعظ والاعتبار بذكر الخطط والآثار, أو الخطط المقرزية), Arabic (Cairo: Al-Hay-at al-'Amah li Qosour al-Thaqafah, 2002).

¹⁸ Dwight Fletcher Reynolds, *Arab folklore: A Handbook* (Greenwood Press, 2007), 1.

century. According to Gu, this term is “updated with modern experience, and echo the rhythm, intonation and idioms of everyday language.”¹⁹ In this way, the thesis defines its scope, acknowledging the simultaneous effects of Arabic language—in its Pre-Islamic, Islamic and Post-Islamic variations—and Islam in shaping the Sūq’s socio-urban development.

1.3 Research Subject: What is the Arabian ‘Sūq’?

The subject of this dissertation is concerned with the Arabian Sūq and the development of an Arab’s understanding of Sūq-ness at different historical situations. The term ‘Sūq,’ an English phonetic translation of the word (سوق), finds its linguistic root in the Aramaic ‘šūqā’ (street, market), itself a loanword from the Akkadian ‘Sūqu’ (street, from sāqu, meaning narrow).²⁰ While, the term Sūq (سوق) is currently employed to define, “a location where merchandise is brought-in for trading,”²¹ most Arabic dictionaries, like *Mu’jam al-Ma’ani al-Jame’*, *Lisan al-Arab*, *Mukhtar al-Sihah* and *Mu’jam Maqayis al-Lughah*, relate the term to the root ‘sāqa’ (ساق) and its array of Quranic usages.²² According to *Mu’jam al-Ma’ani al-Jame’*, the root ‘sāqa’ denotes multiple meanings, like: 1) leading cattle to a meadow, 2) driving a vehicle, 3) broadcasting news, 4) transmitting a conversation or telling a story, 5) delivering something to someone, such as money or dowry, 6) spreading of dust by the effect of wind, and 7) bringing oneself to death.²³ This range of definitions suggest an intricate relationship between the Arabian Sūq’s physical structure and its social

¹⁹ Gu, *A Cultural History of the Arabic Language*, 112.

²⁰ David A. Dorsey, *The Roads and Highways of Ancient Israel* (Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1991), 240.

²¹ Gharipour, "The Culture and Politics of Commerce."

²² *Mu’jam al-Ma’ani al-Jame’*, s.v. "سوق," online, <http://www.almaany.com/ar/dict-ar-ar/%D8%B3%D9%88%D9%82/> (accessed October 28, 2016). Translation proposed by author. السُّوقُ: الموضع الذي يجلب إليه المتاع والبيع والابتاع (تَوْنَتْ وتَذَكَّر)

²³ *Mu’jam al-Ma’ani al-Jame’*, s.v. "ساق," online, <http://www.almaany.com/ar/dict-ar-ar/%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%82/> (accessed October 26, 2016). The above seven definitions of the term sāqa are extracted and translated from the following Arabic entry (above translation proposed by author):

سَاقٍ يَسُوقُ ، سُقٌّ ، سَوْقًا وسِبَاقًا وسِبَاقَةً وسِبَاقَةً ، وَمَسَاقًا فهو سَائِقٌ ، والمفعول مَسُوقٌ - سَاقٍ الْمَرِيضَ بِنَفْسِهِ ، نَفْسُهُ : شَرَعَ فِي نَزْعِ الرُّوحِ ، أَيْ لَحْظَةً الْاِخْتِصَارِ - سَاقٍ فَلَانًا : أَصَابَ سَاقَهُ - سَاقِ الْإِبِلِ : حَنَّهَا مِنْ خَلْفِهَا عَلَى السَّيْرِ - سَاقِ الْحَدِيثِ : سَرَدَهُ ، أَوْرَدَهُ بِسَهْوَةٍ وَسِلَاسَةٍ - سَاقِ الْحَدِيثِ إِلَيْهِ : وَجَّهَهُ ، - سَاقِ الْقِصَّةِ : قَصَّهَا ، - سَاقِ الْمَهْرِ إِلَى الْمَرْأَةِ : قَدَّمَهُ ، حَمَلَهُ إِلَيْهَا - سَاقِ إِلَيْهِ الْمَالَ : أَرْسَلَهُ إِلَيْهِ ، قَدَّمَهُ بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ - سَاقَهُ إِلَى الْهَلَاكِ / سَاقَهُ لِلْهَلَاكِ : دَفَعَهُ إِلَيْهِ - سَاقِ اللَّهِ الْخَيْرَ : أَرْسَلَهُ

perception as a passageway, an idea that possibly made room for a versatility of urban layouts. Among these layouts is the thoroughfare market street and the bazaar, both of which are interchangeably referred to as Sūq by current scholars.²⁴

While these two urban structures are present in most Arab cities and serve a similar function, the thesis focuses on the traditional thoroughfare street and its possible role in circulating some historical and social meanings, and not on the bazaar or the market square, which **implies** a stand-alone trading venue.

This differentiation is extracted from the works of Ibn Battuta (1304-1369) and William Marçais (1872-1956), who refer to the central market square as *Qaiçaria* (قيصرية) and not Sūq. Ibn Battuta further notes that the term *Qaiçaria* is derived from an Arabic adaptation of the Roman title ‘Caesar’ (قيصر), referring to a Byzantine-inspired “square building containing chambers, storerooms, and stalls for merchants.”²⁵ In contrast, both Ibn Battuta and Marçais describe the Sūq as a narrow street flanked by privately owned shops, usually dedicated to specific professions, ethnic groups or the selling of particular merchandise.²⁶ Aside from these descriptions, the term Sūq has also been employed before and after the coming of Islam to denote a versatile public space, where trading seems to amass various meanings.²⁷ This is understood from many Quranic verses, like,

*O you who have believed, shall I guide you to a transaction that will save you from a painful punishment? - [It is that] you believe in Allah and His Messenger and strive in the cause of Allah with your wealth and your lives. That is best for you, if you should know.*²⁸

²⁴ This shall be discussed through the works of Bianca in chapter 4.

²⁵ Ibn Battuta, *Travels in Asia and Africa: 1325-1354*, edited by Sir E. Denison Ross and Eileen Power, translated by H. A. Gibb (UK: Routledge Curzon, 2005), 350; Marçais, “*L’Islamisme et la Vie Urbaine*,” 230-231.

²⁶ Ibn Battuta, *Travels in Asia and Africa*, 350.

²⁷ One example is found in Quran (*al-Furqan*) 25:7, “And they say, “What is this messenger that eats food and walks in the streets [Sūqs]?”” Abu Hatim al-Razi (811-890AD), defines the term Sūq here as street, after the following *hadith*: “We have been told by Abdullah bin Suleiman Bin al-Ash’ath, after al-Husayn bin Ali, after ‘Amer bin al-Furat, after Asbatt, that (eats food and walks in the Sūqs) refers to the street.” Hadith source: Abdul Rahman Ibn Mohamed Ibn Idris al-Razi Ibn Abi Hatim, *Tafseer al-Quran al-‘Athim* (تفسير القرآن العظيم), Arabic 2nd ed., edited by As’ad Mohamed al-Tayeb (Cairo: Mustafa Nizar al-Baz Press, 1998). Translation proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

[١٤٩٨٥] حدثنا عبد الله بن سليمان بن الأشعث، ثنا الحسين بن علي، ثنا عامر ابن الفرات، ثنا أسباط، عن السدي قوله: (يَأْكُلُ الطَّعَامَ وَيَمْشِي فِي الْأَسْوَاقِ) قال: هي الطريق.

²⁸ Quran (*al-Saff*) 61:10-11, English translation, <http://quran.com/61> (accessed May 18, 2016).

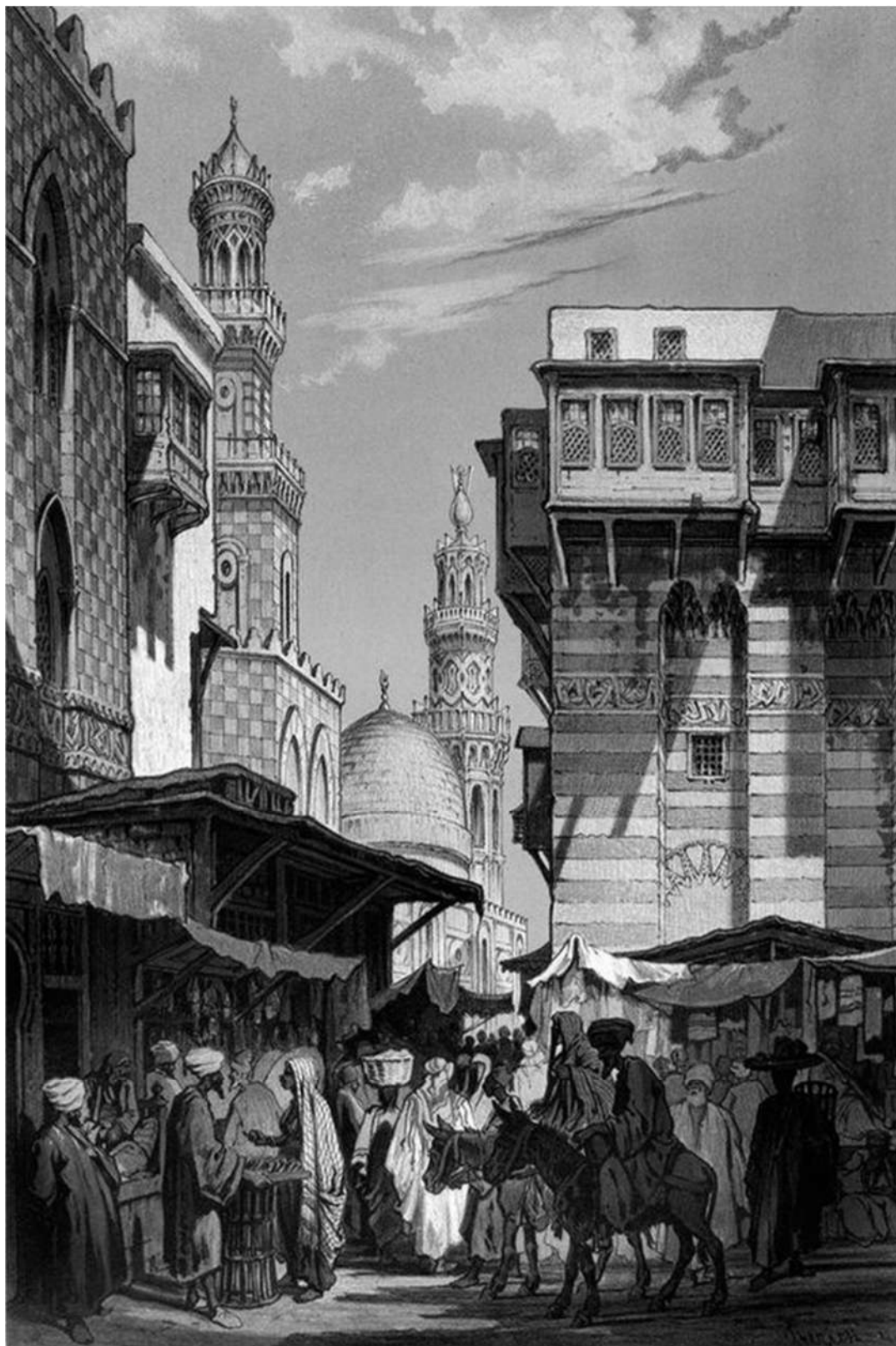


Figure 1 - Orientalist painting showing a Sūq in Cairo in 1862 by Preziosi.



Figure 2 - Modern adaptation of the concept of *Qaiçaria* in Saudi Arabia, *Qaiçaria* Al-Rashid or Al-Rashid Mall.

The metaphor of trade in the above verses suggests the importance of Sūq-ness in the life of a Pre-Islamic and early Muslim Arab. Since there seems to be a gap in our knowledge regarding the historical development of such metaphors or their effects in shaping some of the region's socio-urban practices, the research divides the Sūq's historical development into three periods, each of **which** attempts to counterpoise the space's physical development against its contemporaneous descriptions (section 1.2). By doing so, the research aspires to uncover and trace the development of some of the poetic metaphors that are adhered to a Sūq's socio-urban experience at a specific place and time.

1.4 Research Precedents and Subject Areas

The subject of this research adheres to two subject areas: The Arab city and Socio-urban theory. The following presents an overview of some of the most important theories pertaining to these two areas, focusing on those works that can assist in locating important issues in contemporary socio-urban theory in relation to the case of the Sūq. So, the following overview examines these studies' repertoire of methodological approaches, for purposes of identifying some of the

available methods today and for setting aside some of the shortcomings that are related to these methods' application and/or their purported conclusions.

1.4.1 The Arabian City and Islamic Urbanism

While there are copious publications that deal with Arab cities' urban development, there are few available books that examine the Sūq as an autonomous subject. Among these dedicated books, Saeed al-Afghany's book *Aswaq Al Arab fil Jahiliyyati wal Islam* [The Sūqs of the Arabs in Jahiliya and Islam] (1960), Walter M. Weiss and Kurt Michael Westermann's *The Bazaar: Markets and Merchants of the Islamic World* (1998), and Mohammed Gharipour's *The Bazaar in the Islamic City: Design, Culture, and History* (2012) are the most relevant.²⁹ There are also some recent articles on the subject, such as Mohga Embaby's "Sustainable Urban Rehabilitation of Historic Markets: Comparative Analysis" (2014), Ahood Al-Maimani et al. 'Exploring Socio-Spatial Aspects of Traditional Souqs: The Case of Souq Mutrah, Oman' (2014), Nur Elmessiri and Nigel Ryan's 'Arms Full of Things: Souq Al-Imam Al-Shafei at the Southern Cemetery' (2001), and Ali A. Arouf's 'A Tale of Two Souqs: The Paradox of Gulf Urban Diversity' (2012).³⁰ Again, despite their dedication to the subject, few of these references examine the poetics of the space and/or its different structures and patterns of daily lived experiences. Among these few references is Al-Afghany's 1960's book, which recounts important historical events of Pre-Islamic and early Islamic Sūqs as told through the poetry of the

²⁹ Saeed Al-Afghany, *Aswaq al arab fil jahiliyyati wal islam* (أسواق العرب في الجاهلية والإسلام), Arabic, 3rd ed. (Beirut: Dar El Fikr, 1960); Walter M. Weiss and Kurt-Michael Westermann, *The Bazaar: Markets and Merchants of the Islamic World* (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd., 1998); Mohammad Gharipour, *The Bazaar in the Islamic City: Design, Culture, and History* (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2012).

³⁰ Mohga Embaby, "Sustainable Urban Rehabilitation of Historic Markets: Comparative Analysis," in *International Journal of Engineering Research and Technology* 3, no. 4 (2014): 1017 – 1032; Ahood Al-Maimani et. al., "Exploring Socio-Spatial Aspects of Traditional Souqs: The Case of Souq Mutrah, Oman," in *Archnet-IJAR, International Journal of Architectural Research* 8, no. 1 (2014): 50-65; Nur Elmessiri and Nigel Ryan, "Arms Full of Things: Souq Al-Imam Al-Shafei at the Southern Cemetery," *Alif: Journal of Comparative Poetics*, no.21 (American University in Cairo Press, 2001) : 9-24; Ali A. Arouf, "A Tale of Two Souqs: The Paradox of Gulf Urban Diversity," in *Open House International* 10, no.2 (2012): 72-81.

time. Yet, al-Afghany's book, despite its reliance on poetry and its **descriptions** of the geo-political **events** of the time in question, the book does not explain the relationship or effects of these historical **situations** on the Sūq's experience.

Another reference is Elmessiri and Ryan's article, which presents **a** deconstructive analysis of how it is to be in Cairo's Sūq Al-Imam Al-Shafei, of the objects displayed, of the disposition of the people and their interaction not only with others but most importantly with the objects on display. The authors' approach allows the Sūq's lived experience to emerge from within the objects themselves, which seem to extract their validity and meaning from the surrounding context and people's narratives.

In contrast to these two references, Weiss and Westermann's book provides a touristic narrative of famous bazaars in different parts of the Islamic world, including Egypt, Morocco, Syria, Persia and India. In doing so, the authors attempt to reveal the different regional characteristics of these Sūqs, their activities and major merchandise. Similarly, Gharipour's book provides an anthology of various essays on Islamic urbanism, of which the bazaar's political development, economic strategies and demographic make-up take precedence. As for journal publications, most of the aforementioned papers are concerned with the assimilation and analysis of quantitative evidence, as is the case in Ali A. Arouf's 'Tale of Two Souqs,' which examines the concept of diversity in emerging Gulf States, taking the Sūqs of Bahrain and Qatar as its main case studies. The paper argues that the traditional market can provide an urban solution for the problems imposed by population diversity. It also describes the renovation strategies undertaken in these two Sūqs and their effects on the space's social perception. The value of the paper lies in its brief reference to the nature of Gulf Sūq festivals, describing their role in bridging the gap between a city's past heritage and its modern-day appearance.

1.4.2 Socio-Urban Theory in Architecture

The second subject area is Socio-urban theory, a subject that has been investigated through various paradigms and methods, like Gestalt Theory, Behavioural Geography, Semiotics, Psychology and History, to name a few. Starting with Gestalt theory, the work of Rudolf Arnheim, particularly his book *The Dynamics of Architectural Form* (1978), is of special importance, owing to its argument that the built environment beholds some innate symbolism that engages its perceivers, both mentally and physically.³¹ In this regard, Arnheim believes that, “the varying shapes of buildings in a cityscape add up to a kind of visual language, which provides a different ‘word’ for each kind of structure.”³² In his article, ‘Buildings and Human Figures Aware of Each Other’ (1999), Arnheim differentiates between two types of perception systems.³³ The first is the “reality system” or the physical space populated by humans and animals alike. This shared world represents an absolute or constant viewing stage, where living things, depending on their spatial position, see the world from varying angles. This disparity in perspective is referred to by Arnheim as “the apprehension system” or “the mental activity of comprehension and representation.”³⁴ Through the active interaction of these two systems, man’s outlook and understanding of the built environment is constantly changing. In *The Body of the City* (1996) Steve Pile expands this argument, stating that the Man-Environment relationship could be studied from two distinct perspectives: “the phenomenal and the behavioural.”³⁵ Following W. Kirk, Pile believes that the behavioural environment is a ‘psycho-physical’ space communicated through a set of cultural values, which themselves undergo constant historical validation. Accordingly, he argues that the failure of some societies to rejuvenate themselves on the physical

³¹ Rudolf Arnheim, *The Dynamics of Architectural Form* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978).

³² Arnheim, *The Dynamics of Architectural Form*, 206.

³³ Rudolf Arnheim, "Buildings and Human Figures Aware of Each Other," *Leonardo* 32, no. 3 (1999): 197-198, <https://muse.jhu.edu/> (accessed Nov. 27, 2008).

³⁴ Arnheim, "Buildings and Human Figures Aware of Each Other," 197.

³⁵ Steve Pile, *The Body of the City: Psychoanalysis, Space and Subjectivity* (New York: Routledge, 1996).

environmental level is attributed to their inability to redefine their cultural values in accordance to world changes. This is an important argument that will built upon in this research, when discussing the role of contemporary Arab poetics in mediating between physical reality, individual perceptions/experiences and some socially-constructed meanings of space (sections 7.6 and 7.7).

Still, the research will further propose that the emphasis on the psychoanalytic dimension of experience, as suggested by many Gestalt theorists, falls short in explaining the methods through which individual images translate themselves into a set of socially-shared meanings. Looking at some phenomenological explanations of this process, such as those presented by Avicenna (980-1037AD) and later explained by Nader El Bizri, it is understood that this translation takes effect not only on an unconscious level but also through social participation and negotiation.³⁶ According to Avicenna, visibility is divided into inner and outer perception, where the latter is concerned with defining the form of an object while the former is preoccupied with discovering its meaning in relation to everyday experience. For this reason, Avicenna argues that perception is sensory while imagination is intellectual, each working on a different level of abstraction. He further argues that in order to decode the underlying meanings of objects, one must venture into a series of reflections that start from sensory perception to imagination and finally to what he refers to as prehension or *al-wahm* (الوهم), defined by El-Bizri as,

*Al-wahm is bound up with its material context and the practical circumstances of that context. Al-wahm is also associated with sensible imagination in the service of the pragmatics of practical reason... This inner sense of prehension (al-wahm) performs a creative process of abstracting form from matter in such a way that it sets imagination into a higher level of play while providing it with significant meanings that induce actions.*³⁷

Some philosophers, such as Deborah L. Black, A.M. Goichon and Parviz Morewedge, see Avicenna's concept of *al-wahm* (also referred to as estimation by Black) an authentic Islamic addition to the bulk of phenomenological thinking,

³⁶ Nader El-Bizri, *The Phenomenological Quest: Between Avicenna and Heidegger* (New York: Global Publications, 2000).

³⁷ El-Bizri, *The Phenomenological Quest*, 174.

providing a link between perception and action where “the meanings, that *al-wahm* receives from sensible entities, are practical act-oriented significant meanings that induce useful actions.”³⁸ Morewedge argues that Avicenna’s concept of *al-wahm* allows the intersection between the universal and the particular, serving as a platform of practical associations between general concepts and specific situations.³⁹ Therefore, the concept of *al-wahm* will be used in this research to explain the relational capacity of ‘place’ in Arabian aesthetic experience, allowing the intersection between temporal sensory experience of the Arabian Sūq (*suwar al-mahsusat*) and the mental re-appropriation of its meaning (*ma’ani al-mahsusat*) through a constantly evolving dialogue.⁴⁰

Another important framework that explains this relationship is presented through Semiotics, whose proponents include Henri Lefebvre, Michel de Certeau, Jean Baudrillard and Roland Barthes. According to this paradigm, understanding socio-urban relations requires the active coding and decoding of different sign systems—linguistic and non-linguistic—that contribute to a city’s communication processes. An example of this argument is found in the works of Lefebvre, who believes that spaces and buildings possess meaning that is reciprocated through symbolism. He also argues that buildings represent a “homogeneous matrix of capitalist space” and are symbolic of specific types of political economies, creating “a particular spatial code, which simultaneously commands bodies and orders space.”⁴¹ Here, Lefebvre claims that buildings are legible signs in the overall cityscape and are *a priori* living spaces, noting that such legibility is based on two processes: displacement and condensation. These processes summarize his ideas on the relationship between body, social space and language. For him, buildings (monuments) are spatial signs that can displace and condense meanings,

³⁸ Deborah L. Black, “Imagination and Estimation: Arabic Paradigms and Western Transformations,” *Topoi* 19 (2000): 59-75; A. M. Goichon, *The Philosophy of Avicenna and its Influence on Medieval Europe* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1969); Parviz Morewedge, “Philosophical Analysis and Ibn Sīnā’s ‘Essence-Existence’ Distinction,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 92, no. 3 (1972):425.

³⁹ El-Bizri, *The Phenomenological Quest*, 174.

⁴⁰ Black, “Imagination and Estimation: Arabic Paradigms and Western Transformations,” 60.

⁴¹ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991), 143.

hence pointing beyond the building's physical appearance towards larger universal concerns. This substitution of meaning results in the reduction of the original political or economic modality of the site into something far from its intended purpose. Accordingly, Lefebvre believes in the subjectivity of urban discourse, claiming that "there is an immediate relationship between the body and space, between the body's deployment in space and its occupation of space."⁴² He further explains,

*Space has a dual 'nature' and a general 'existence. On the one hand, one relates oneself to space, situates oneself in space. One confronts both immediacy and objectivity to one's own. One places oneself at the centre, designates oneself, measures oneself, and uses oneself as a measure. One is, in short, a 'subject.' A specific social status – assuming always a stable situation, and hence determination by and in a state – implies a role and a function: an individual and a public identity. It also implies a location, a place in society, a position.*⁴³

Here, Lefebvre reckons that each element in space acts as a mirror upon which the whole world is reflected. Changes in one's position or direction bring about a new perspective of the world in both its visible and intellectual forms. As objects reveal themselves through spatial movement, they introduce many symbolic associations that were previously unrecognized. The multiple reflections of objects upon each other create dynamic spatial relationships that summon both duality and opposition, where symmetry, reflections, symbols, consciousness, time and space become constituting elements in the production of space.⁴⁴

Even though this is an important argument that will also be built upon in this research, the problem of Lefebvre's work lies first in its marginalization of social dialogue, which plays an important role in the conscious displacement of linguistic signs. Another problem here is the assumption that spatial involvement is chiefly concerned with body-deployment or self-recognition in space. While this is an important argument, it still falls short in explaining the revelatory process through which a change in body position or movement creates a change in

⁴² Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 171.

⁴³ Ibid., 182.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 187.

meaning beyond the limits of perceptual apprehension. Moreover, by limiting his critique to Western—specifically capitalist—everyday life and its power-driven struggles, his framework will probably fall short in explaining how individual intentions work with or against different historically accumulated symbols, which in case of the Sūq behold non-Western significations. For this reason, the research, while acknowledging the importance of Lefebvre’s views in studying 20th century urbanism, will propose some adaptations to his position to show how a city has an ideological, political, economic, social and cultural personality that is determined not by its spatial elements alone but also, “by people’s evaluation, choice and attachment to the townscape.”⁴⁵ These adaptations are based on Ibn Arabi’s (1165-1240) Sufist concept of revelation, or *tajalli*, which attempts to explain the effects of ‘in-time’ lived experiences, language and imagination on an individual’s ability to extract meaning from everyday experiences (section 6.5.1).⁴⁶ Following Ibn Arabi’s argument that ‘creative imagination’ belongs not to the world of illusions but is manifest as a form of ‘Shadow-Play’ that resides in a “place of theophanic visions, the scene on which visionary events and symbolic histories appear,” the research intends to explore the role of ‘creative imagination’ in condensing and displacing some reciprocated Islamic themes.⁴⁷

The need for such adaptation can be also justified through Kevin Lynch’s *The Image of the City* (1960), where he argues that a city is a progressive project that is shaped by people’s movements and perception, as much as the diachronic development of its buildings, streets and landscape.⁴⁸ Exploring the potential of mental mapping, Lynch argues that perception not only grants the city its legibility and appeal but also allows it to become intelligible to both its residents and visitors alike. Lynch argues that modern cities with their extensive road and sign systems probably contribute to the mental well-being of its residents, whose physical orientation is dependent on their ability to create mental maps of the

⁴⁵ Steve Pile, *The Body of the City: Psychoanalysis, Space and Subjectivity* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 211.

⁴⁶ Henri Corbin, *Creative Imagination in the Sufism of ibn Arabi*, translated by Ralph Manheim (NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969).

⁴⁷ Corbin, *Creative Imagination in the Sufism of ibn Arabi*, 4.

⁴⁸ Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1960).

exterior surroundings. Memories associated with these mental maps act as effective tools in alleviating distress or anxiety against any feelings of loss. As such, landmarks, street nodes, and signs are not only directional objects, but are also active contributors to the city's social life, where,

*a good environmental image gives its possessor an important sense of emotional security... a distinctive and legible environment not only offers security but also heightens the potential depth and intensity of human experience ... Potentially, the city is in itself the powerful symbol of a complex society. If visually set forth, it can also have strong expressive meaning.*⁴⁹

According to Lynch, the city image is divided into three parts: identity, structure and meaning.⁵⁰ First, a strong city image must adopt a strong identifiable group of elements that assert its uniqueness. Second, the city image must incorporate spatial patterns that directly relate to its distinctive elements, where observers can foster some meaningful relationships or associations. Yet, the production of meaning is a highly complex procedure that varies according to personal attitudes as much as social attributes. Therefore, he argues that it is unlikely to achieve a definite group meaning, which, in contrast to the first two criteria, cannot be manipulated by the physical organization of space. This is again an important argument, validating the research's proposition that different cultures create different symbolic associations with their urban settings.

Lynch's arguments find echoes in Juhani Pallasmaa's phenomenological reflections.⁵¹ For, Lynch's emphasis on the socio-cultural dimension of mental mapping supports Pallasmaa's critique that today's architectural products are extracted from their urban contexts and are viewed as detached aesthetic objects. Similar to both Lefebvre and Lynch, Pallasmaa believes that, "architectural works are bound to be highly condensed metaphoric representations of culture, and these metaphoric images guide and organize our perceptions and thoughts."⁵² Inspired by the writings of Gaston Bachelard and Martin Heidegger, Pallasmaa argues that

⁴⁹ Lynch, *The Image of the City*, 4-5.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 8.

⁵¹ Juhani Pallasmaa, *The Embodied Image: Imagination and Imagery in Architecture* (West Sussex: John Wiley and Sons Ltd., 2011).

⁵² Pallasmaa, *The Embodied Image*, 118.

architectural imagery is a ‘psychic state’ that interpermeates humans’ experience of the external world, manifesting itself as a reflection of society’s unconscious emotional and historical development. In this way, architectural images represent the basic structures of an individual’s thoughts, memories and even his imagined position in the spatial as well as the social world around him, where, “the experience of ‘homeness’ condenses our feelings of self, belonging, security and meaning.”⁵³ Due to their powerful impact on people’s cognitive imagination, architectural metaphors constitute the essence of dwelling, allowing people to extend their bodies into the spaces around them through, “a process of internalization, identification and projection.”⁵⁴ Moreover, he believes architectural images to be a condensed and abstracted vision of an ideal world, where architectural forms point beyond themselves to the invisible qualities of the urban setting. He claims that, “architectural structures humanize the world by giving it a human measure and a horizon of judgment and meaning.”⁵⁵ Similar to Ibn Arabi’s ideas on theophanic visions, Pallasmaa also believes that architecture is the medium through which people recreate meaningful realities and establish their connection with cosmic orders.⁵⁶ For, the purported theatrical nature of architecture brings forth its aspired ethical role of intensifying the city’s utopian fantasies. For this reason, he believes that architecture must not be regarded as an object of entertainment, but rather as a medium for communicating social aspirations, values and actions. This argument is also important to the development of the **research’s** methodological approach, justifying the need for examining not only the material form of urban/architectural spaces but also the social, religious and political symbols they allude to.

Similarly, in his seminal work *The Architecture of the City* (1966), Aldo Rossi, argues that the city is a historical process of construction, which depicts the collective nature of its dwellers “because architecture gives concrete form to society and is intimately connected with it and with nature ... With time, the city

⁵³ Pallasmaa, *The Embodied Image*, 120.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 121.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 122.

⁵⁶ Karsten Harries, *The Ethical Function of Architecture*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000).

grows upon itself; it acquires a consciousness and memory.”⁵⁷ For Rossi, the process of architectural development in the city speaks of many dualities, depicting aspects of universal/particular and collective/individual. These dualities place an emphasis on individual experiences and their relation to the overall social perception of the city. Even though Rossi’s romanticism focuses on “those aspects of reality that are most individual, particular, irregular, and also most interesting,” he is aware of the problems created by political and ideological interferences.⁵⁸ According to him, these interferences result in “serious distortions,” a critical issue marginalized by Pallasmaa yet intensified in the works of Lefebvre.⁵⁹ Forwarding a middle argument in this regard, Rossi proposes that the city is composed of a series of collective experiences, which measure the quality of its social spaces. Still, Rossi admits to the variability of socio-historical contexts, arguing that a city’s urban artefacts must be seen as works of art that intend to transpose certain unconscious meanings to their audience today. For this reason, he argues for studying the historical development of architectural types in any city, since they represent imperative channels for establishing the relationship between the city’s historical development, its urban/architectural forms and society. Even though Rossi’s work is positioned as part of a larger Romantic tradition, his emphasis on the historical constructed-ness of socio-urban discourse is an important contribution that would be also built upon in this research.

The urban scene, as a stage for daily lived events, was the focal point of this section, granting the research a broader platform of some available paradigms and methodologies that are employed to study socio-urban relations today.⁶⁰ Figure 3 summarizes the previously discussed theoretical concerns, identifying two overlapping circles that connect the lines of thought of the reviewed works. The first circle, tracked through red arrows, illustrates the elements of

⁵⁷ Aldo Rossi, *The Architecture of the City* (Massachusetts: Oppositions Books, 1984), 21.

⁵⁸ Rossi, *The Architecture of the City*, 21.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 27.

⁶⁰ Other prominent works that have been consulted include Collin Rowe’s *Collage City* (1978), Lewis Mumford’s *The Culture of Cities* (1938), Joseph Rykwert’s *The Idea of Town* (1976), Michel de Certeau’s *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1980) and Alberto Perez Gomez *Built Upon Love* (2008).

phenomenal space and the second circle, tracked through blue arrows, outlines the methods for examining physical space. In studying urban spaces, most of the reviewed works seem to put similar weight onto each track, yet with little explanation of how to effectively study both aspects within a holistic methodical framework. Also, many of the proposed methods seem to be focusing on some particular Western examples of social and urban development, whose historical trajectories differ considerably from those of the Arab region. While the physical development of both cultural regions can be studied using many of the previously discussed methodologies, it seems difficult to validate some of their theoretical concerns regarding the role of linguistic symbols on a city's socio-urban relations, given that many of the explored linguistic symbols relate to a distinctly Western context. For these reasons, the research proposes that Hans Georg Gadamer's phenomenological hermeneutics is a better-suited approach for examining the development of the Arabian Sūq's socio-urban relations at different historical situations. For, Gadamer's hermeneutic approach, as shall be explored in chapters 2 and 3, offers many opportunities for exploring the subject through a cross-disciplinary dialogue between different physical and poetic evidences. This furnishes the research with a further interpretive capacity for extracting phenomena and phenomenological thinking from Arabic sources, which include the literary production of Pre-Islamic poets, contemporary writers, Arabian travel journals and the mystic or *Sufist* interpretations of some prominent Islamic philosophers. These references, which present themselves as 'eminent' Arabic texts, will be used for analysing their texture of 'reciprocal effects' and for portraying their contribution to the development of phenomenological thinking in the Arab world.⁶¹ In other words, the research makes use of a range of textual evidences—poetic and literary—whose choice is based not on the number of citations and references made to them alone but also on their continuous influence on the region's cultural products. So, these textual evidences are sought on the

⁶¹ Hans Georg Gadamer, Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall, *Truth and Method*, 2nd Revised Edition (London: Continuum, 2004), 578 and 284. Gadamer uses the term 'eminent text' to describe poetry, which to him is 'paradigmatic of language at its most powerful.'

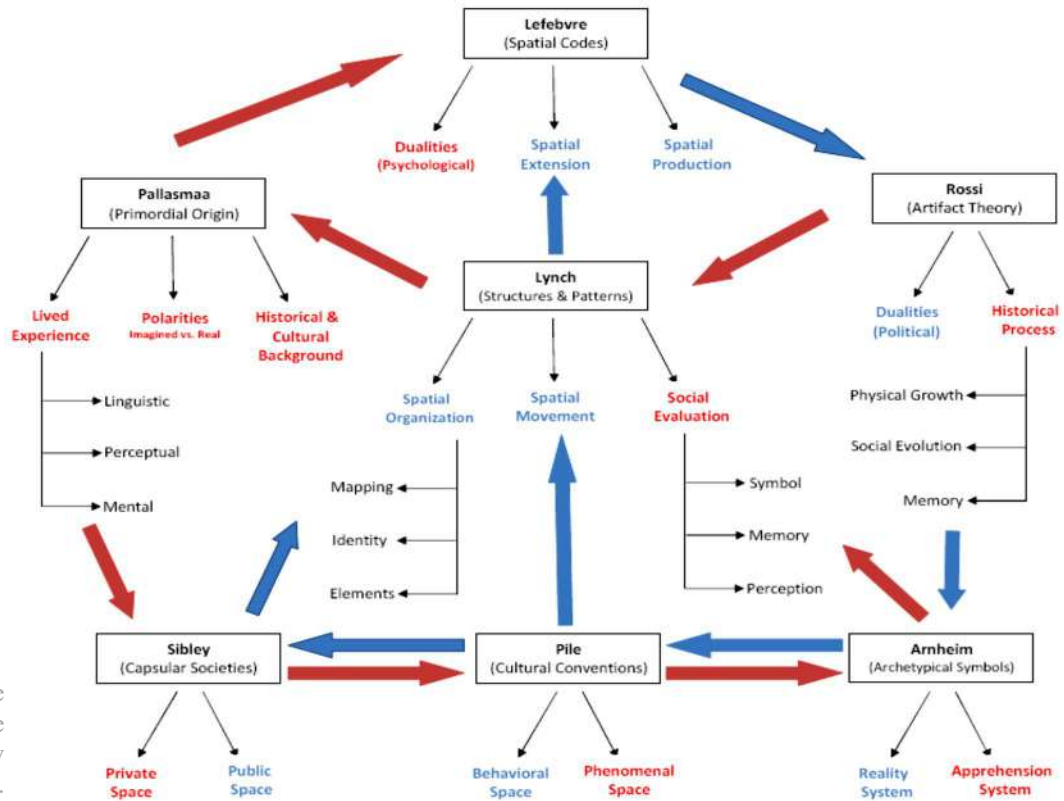


Figure 3 - Comparative Chart of reviewed literature in Socio-Urban Theory. By author.

basis that they can grant us access to the different social meanings and poetic interpretations that have been adhered to the Sūq at different historical periods, assisting the research to answer further specific questions about the main phenomenological objects at work in Arabic literature and to extend this to an analysis of the Arabian Sūq and how its everyday experience **constitutes** ‘a unity of effects.’⁶² By reaching to these specific concepts in Gadamer’s hermeneutics, it is necessary then to introduce and define other key concepts that are imperative constituents of his philosophy.

1.5 Gadamer’s Philosophical Hermeneutics: Key Concepts and Terms

Despite his early reliance on Heidegger’s teachings and philosophy, Gadamer’s philosophical hermeneutics is considered a milestone in the field of

⁶² The concept of ‘unity of effects’ in relation to Gadamer’s Hermeneutic theory suggests that the meaning of text and its effects are historically mediated. Gadamer uses the German term ‘*Wirkungsgeschichte*,’ to explain how the *Wirkung* of text, or its effect, which varies at different ages, is an important constituent of its meaning.

phenomenological research, allowing interpretive, or practical, philosophy to venture into versatile disciplines such as Humanities, Art Theory, Social Sciences, Healthcare and Law. Still, Gadamer's hermeneutics is less popular in architectural academia, owing to some critical views that believe it to be lacking a defined methodology (section 2.3.1) and/or emphasising subjectivity and historicism (section 2.3.2). So, this thesis will take for its underlying core the task of portraying the validity of Gadamer's theories as "by far the most convincing in their consistency and continuity," and of demonstrating how his 'Hermeneutic Circle' and 'Fusion of Horizons' present rigorous interpretive tools that can help make sense of the development of non-Western spaces in general and the Arabian Sūq in specific (section 3.2.3).⁶³ By proposing so, the research argues against some prevailing critiques that see little in Gadamer's work beyond the retrieval of the "ethical ideas that are only partially realized in communities to which they belong."⁶⁴ For, this falsely implies that the process of historical effectiveness for Gadamer is synonymous to preservation, fundamentalism and mere self-knowledge. Contrastingly, the research will forward the argument that Gadamer's concept of 'effective history,' or history of effects, is a culturally sensitive approach that sees the act of interpretation as a dialogical relationship between past and present, transforming the whole process into one of its many parts. By acknowledging the integral role of the interpreter in this process, Gadamer's hermeneutics allows the act of interpretation to move from the particular to the universal through an active negotiation of historically mediated meanings, portraying that "hermeneutics is not a doctrine of methods for the humanities and social sciences but rather a basic insight into what thinking and knowing mean for human beings in their practice life, even if one makes use of scientific methods."⁶⁵

⁶³ Dalibor Vesely, *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation: The Question of Creativity in the Shadow of Production* (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2004), 66.

⁶⁴ Georgia Warnke, *Gadamer: Hermeneutics, Tradition and Reason* (California: Stanford University Press, 1987), 21.

⁶⁵ Hans-Georg Gadamer, "From Word to Concept: The Task of Hermeneutics as Philosophy," in *The Gadamer Reader: A Bouquet of the Later Writings*, edited and translated by Richard E. Palmer (Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2007), 113.

In order to understand this theoretical stance, an explanation of some of Gadamer's key ideas and concepts must be introduced. The first idea is that of 'prejudice,' a term used by Gadamer to explain that interpretation is always preceded by one's accumulated knowledge or presuppositions.⁶⁶ Despite the many negative connotations that this term implies today, Gadamer reverts the term to its original meaning as "a judgment that is rendered before all the elements that determine a situation have been finally examined," hence arguing that prejudice is a form of historical knowledge sustained by social affirmation.⁶⁷ Still, Gadamer believes that the object of interpretation must be addressed in a correlative way, where the object is not to be seen in the light of one meaning but as a source of unforeseen possibilities, bringing into visibility something that was forgotten.⁶⁸ Accordingly, Gadamer requires the historical embeddedness of the interpreter, where an 'effective historical consciousness' would protect the validity of interpretation from the 'tyranny of hidden prejudices.'⁶⁹ Given that the interpretation of any particular subject stands in the tradition of similar or former studies, Gadamer argues that previous knowledge culminates into the interpreter's own set of prejudices too, forming together what he refers to as the 'fore-structures' of understanding. In this way, what Gadamer describes as 'effective-history,' refers to, "a relationship in which exist both the reality of history and the reality of historical understanding."⁷⁰ Therefore, interpretation beholds both the subject and object into one large horizon, permitting the process of interpretation to move beyond the limited visibility of current situations and to "listen to the past in a way that enables it to make its own meaning heard."⁷¹ Gadamer refers to this process as 'fusion of horizons,' where one opens up to other horizons and acknowledges their differences and possible contributions.

In explaining the anthropological basis of human understanding, Gadamer emphasizes that historical positioning, language and lived experience are

⁶⁶ Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 268-278.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 271-273.

⁶⁸ G. Harman, *Heidegger Explained: From Phenomenon to Thing* (Illinois: Open Court, 2007), 92.

⁶⁹ Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 578.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 271-272.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

imperative variables in any effective interpretation process (section 2.4.1).⁷² Still, he believes that the hubris of ethnocentrism is one of the biggest challenges to this process (section 1.10), since we are not only seeking to understand the ‘other’ horizon but we are also trying to overcome our own prejudices. Accordingly, Gadamer establishes his philosophical hermeneutics on Plato’s dialogue and Aristotle’s ‘*phronesis*,’ or practical wisdom. In this sense, the role of hermeneutics is not to devise answers through a one-sided process but to establish a dialogue that is accessible for re-interpretation.⁷³ By doing so, Gadamer extends the role of hermeneutics into every aspect of human understanding, where the idea of the ‘Hermeneutic Circle,’ as an interpretive approach (section 3.2.3), “refers to the constantly turning movement between one part of the text [or object] and its total meaning. In making sense of a fragment of the text one is always simultaneously interpreting the whole.”⁷⁴

1.6 Research Aim, Questions and Objectives

In light of the above, the aim of this thesis is to offer a hermeneutic reading of the relationship between the Arabian Sūq’s experience and its socially constructed meaning at different historical contexts, relying on the bulk of architectural as well as poetic products of the region as the research’s primary sources (Fig. 5). In other words, the intent of the following research is to revisit the meaning of Sūq-ness in the context of Arabian daily life and “to inquire into its hermeneutic productivity.”⁷⁵ By doing so, the thesis attempts to answer the following questions:

- a) What do we currently know about the Arabian Sūq phenomenon? How was it previously examined? What are some gaps in knowledge and/or prejudices that seem to exist in current studies on the subject?

⁷² Jean Grondin, “Basic Understanding of Understanding,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Gadamer*, edited by Robert J. Dostal (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

⁷³ Nicholas Davey, *Unquiet Understanding: Gadamer's Philosophical Hermeneutics* (New York: SUNY Press, 2006), 1-3.

⁷⁴ Chris Lawn, *Gadamer: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2006), 2.

⁷⁵ Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 284.

- b) What more can a phenomenological hermeneutic approach, specifically that of Hans Georg Gadamer, contribute to our knowledge of the Sūq and to the methods employed to examine it?
- c) In light of Gadamer's hermeneutics, what is the poetic 'relevance' of the Arabian Sūq? Did such relevance change in response to any historical, religious, political and/or social contingency? ⁷⁶
- d) Are there any embodied social meanings underpinning the Sūq's daily lived experience today? How did such meaning(s), if any, develop over time and how did they affect the space's modes of social participation and ritualistic activities at different temporal and spatial intervals?

The research will also attempt to fulfil the following objectives,

- a) To identify through literature review some existing *prejudices* that were historically accumulated on the subject,
- b) To identify and analyse the different social meanings, or linguistic themes, that were adhered to the Arabian Sūq's daily lived experience at variable historical situations,
- c) To uncover the Sūq's poetic capacity, if any, and to test whether and how the space's social poetics developed across the Arab region's disparate geographic and historical contexts,
- d) To trace the transformation of the Sūq's ritualistic activities, in order to ask whether and how the lived experience has changed,
- e) To examine the development of the Sūq's meaning in the context of emerging Arabian urban centres, and to uncover the effects of this meaning's current transformation, if any, on an Arab's perception, memory and participation in Sūq events.

⁷⁶ Richard Palmer, "The Relevance of Gadamer's Philosophical Hermeneutics to Thirty-Six Topics or Fields of Human Activity," Lecture (April 1999), under "Hermeneutics and the Disciplines," <http://www.uma.es/Gadamer/resources/Palmer-2.pdf> (accessed December 17, 2015)."

1.7 Research's Design, Theoretical Application and Sources

The research is grounded both theoretically and methodologically on the philosophical hermeneutics of Hans Georg Gadamer. Even though many argue that Gadamer's interpretive philosophy lacks a definite method, the research applies Gadamer's hermeneutics using two approaches of interpretation: The Hermeneutic Circle and Fusion of Horizons (section 3.2). Through these approaches, the research investigates the development of the Arabian Sūq phenomenon in relation to the variables of History, Language and Lived Experience (section 2.4.1). Figure 4 illustrates the research's theoretical model, showing the different historical parts of the investigation and the research variables. As one possible adaptation of Gadamer's 'Hermeneutic Circle' and 'Fusion of Horizons,' this theoretical model aspires to offer a 'new' interpretation of the Arabian Sūq's socio-urban story, by means of cross-examining the space's physical development against its everyday poetic descriptions at three distinct historical situations. In this way, this model grants the research the possibility to examine a set of distinct yet interrelated projections, where each historical "interpretation begins with fore-conceptions that are replaced by more suitable ones," hence contributing to existing knowledge in two important aspects.⁷⁷ First, the circular movement between the whole and the parts, which is based on Gadamer's theoretical arguments on the nature and workings of the Hermeneutic Circle (sections 1.5 and 3.2.2), seeks to uncover some unforeseen or forgotten social meanings that seem to underpin the Arabian perception, experience and memory of the Sūq at different historical situations. By focusing on the poetic relevance of the Sūq, the research's argues, after Gadamer, that "what constitute the hermeneutical event proper is not language as language, whether grammar or as lexicon; it consists in the coming into language of what has been said in the tradition: an event that is at once appropriation and interpretation."⁷⁸ Accordingly, the research is not seeking Arabic language here to understand its syntactical

⁷⁷ Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 269.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 459.

characteristics but rather to uncover the Arabian culture embodied in it, as handed down linguistically through social exchange.

Second, the application of the Hermeneutic Circle and Fusion of Horizons in this research follows the guidelines proposed by some credible precedents, including the works of Paterson, Higgs, Alvesson, Sköldberg and Mendelson (section 3.2.2).⁷⁹ The research attempts to apply and develop these methodological models by dividing the research into four stages. Each of these stages makes use of a distinct pool of primary and secondary sources, as illustrated in Fig. 5. The first stage is the Pre- knowledge, which acts as an overall literature review of some of the most prominent secondary sources on the subject. The aim of this review, discussed in Chapter 4, is to identify gaps in knowledge and to locate some accumulated prejudices. After identifying some of these gaps and/or prejudices, chapters 5, 6 and 7 deal with specific historical positions, investigating the different events and lived experiences that seem to encircle the Sūq's socio-urban discourse at a specific place and time. So, chapter 5 explores the development of Pre-Islamic Arabian Sūqs, by means of describing, cross-examining and interpreting the urban typology of some prominent archaeological sites in relation to various Sūq-related rituals, as revealed through Pre-Islamic poetry and historical records, considered here as primary sources for this era. The value of this stage is hinged on its ability to offer a broader perspective upon which we can identify some persistent themes that seem to have shaped the perception and experience of Pre-Islamic Arabian Sūqs. These themes are re-examined in Chapter 6 for identifying their reciprocal historical effects, if any, in shaping Arabia's Islamic Sūq stage. Similar to the interpretive process of the previous chapter, the Sūq's Islamic transformation is described, cross-examined and further interpreted in relation to some prominent urban examples and another set of primary Arabic sources, including Quranic verses, travel journals,

⁷⁹ M. Paterson and J. Higgs, "Using Hermeneutics as a Qualitative Research Approach in Professional Practice," *The Qualitative Report* 10, no. 2 (2005), <https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol10/iss2/9> (accessed April 22, 2018): 342-343; Kaj Sköldberg and Mats Alvesson, *Reflexive Methodology: New Vistas for Qualitative Research*, 2nd ed. (Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2009), 120; Jack Mendelson, "The Habermas-Gadamer Debate," in *New German Critique*, no. 18 (Duke University Press, 1979): 44-73.

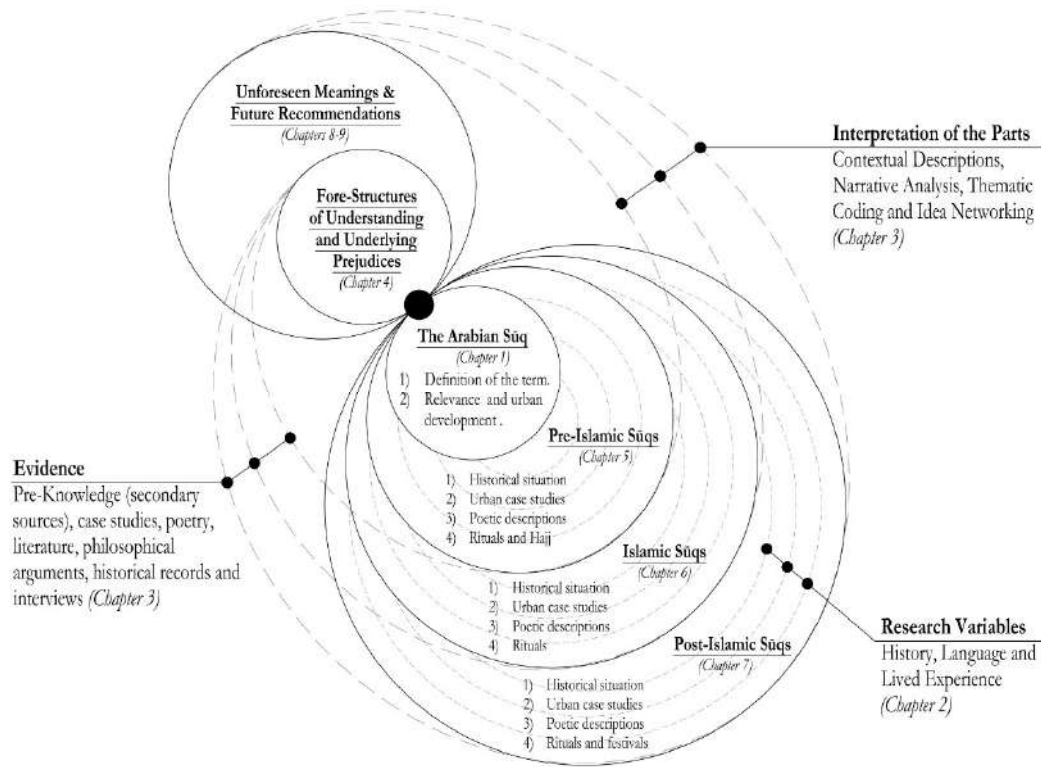


Figure 4 - Theoretical Model of the research, portraying the methodological process of the Hermeneutic circle in relation to the different parts of the investigation and the research's variables. By author.

philosophic discourses, illuminated manuscripts and historical records.

Accordingly, this chapter attempts to establish a relationship, if any, between the Arabian Pre-Islamic understanding of Sūq-ness and its Islamic counterpart, focusing on some of the most important Islamic urban types that have been constructed during the reign of Muslim Arab dynasties from 661AD until the dissolution of the Islamic Caliphate in 1923AD. This is followed by Chapter 7, which cross-examines the findings of the previous chapters against three 20th century urban examples, relying on urban maps, photographs, philosophical writings, contemporary literature, a puppet show, interviews and a social survey as primary sources. This chapter tests the possibility of further displacements in the Sūq's meaning and its socio-urban **relationships** as a result of some current geo-political, ideological, economic and technological contingencies. The findings of these three stages are synthesized in Chapter 8, **culminating into one possible application of Gadamer's 'fusion of horizons.'**

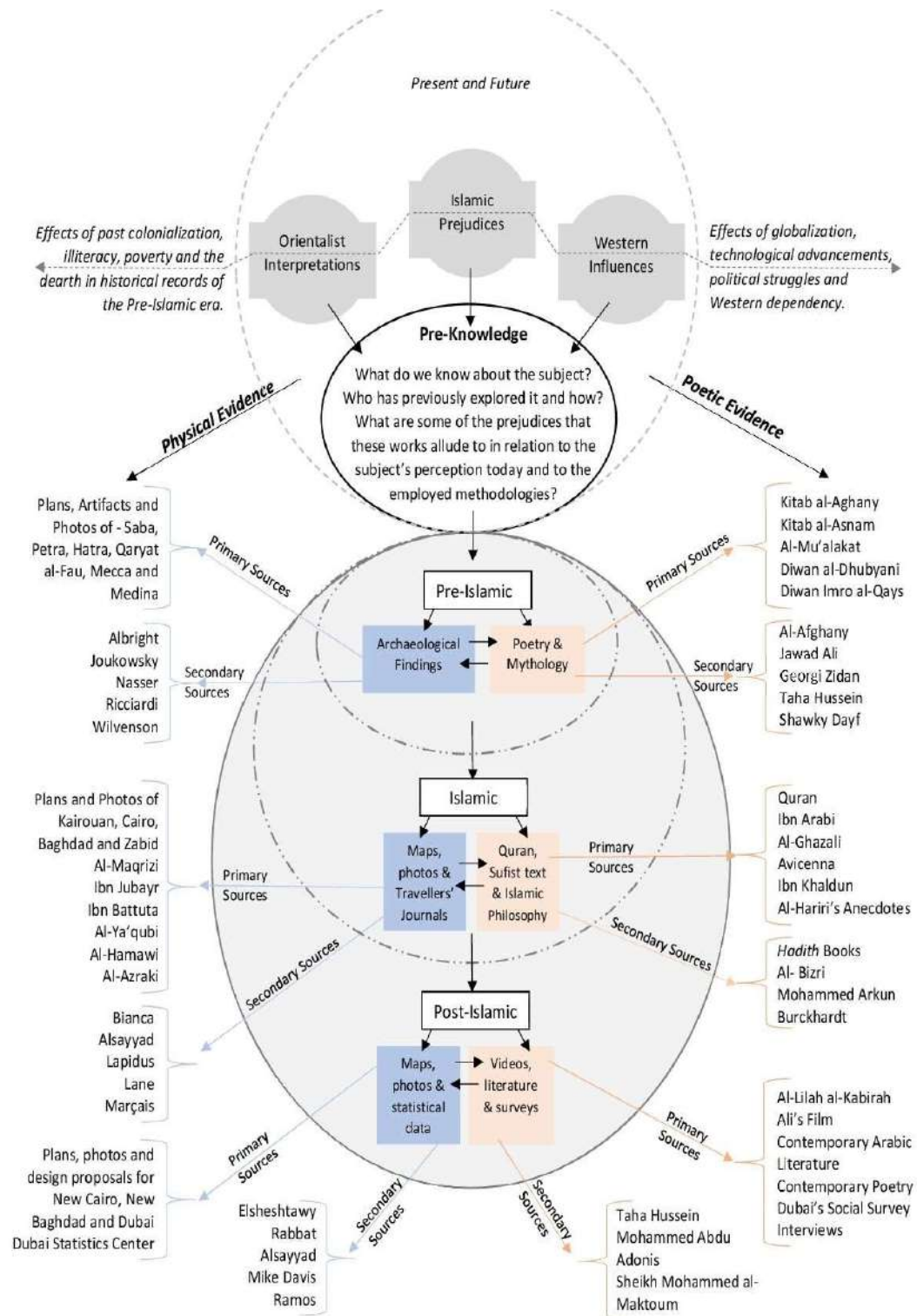


Figure 5 - Graphic Illustration of consulted archive, including primary and secondary sources and their division according to the different sections of the proposed research's hermeneutic circle.

1.8 Research Methods and Approaches to Interpretation

Given the philosophical hermeneutic orientation of this research, it is important to emphasize that while Gadamer “did not remotely intend to deny the necessity of methodical work within the human sciences,” he questioned the ability of a predetermined method to explore the multi-faceted nature of socio-cultural phenomena, arguing instead for a historically effective approach that,⁸⁰

*does not fix concepts eternally, but like practical philosophy, develops them only in outline. They always remain elastic enough, so that their contents can support a certain change. Every understanding moves in outlines, since every understanding is finite and already in time...Therefore, the possibility of changes in understanding does not mean value neutrality, but the awareness of the limits of our preconceptions.*⁸¹

Such flexibility then assumes a mixed-method approach, where particular methods are deployed on the basis of their commensurability with the needs and scope of the different parts in question. This is also emphasized by Richard Hycner, who argues that “the phenomenon dictates the method (not vice-versa) including even the type of participants.”⁸² While this ensures the validity and trustworthiness of findings, possibly also their duplication, it does not suggest generalization or the possibility that other studies would engender the same results, given that the interpreter’s horizon manifests itself as an integral part of the process. This does not encourage impartiality, but rather acknowledges, as Gadamer does, that the interpretive process is conditioned by the perspectival limits of the interpreter’s horizon, which is constantly expanded—let alone challenged—through the incorporation and integration of new evidences.

The starting points for hermeneutic research, as recommended by Clark Moustakas, “are to be found in art and in philological-historical insights,” some of which have been discussed in this introduction (section 1.2 and 1.3).⁸³ Further insights are explored in Chapters 2 and 3, which explain the aim, theoretical

⁸⁰ Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, xvii.

⁸¹ Duška Dobrosavljev, “Gadamer’s Hermeneutics as Practical Philosophy,” *Philosophy, Sociology and Psychology* 2, no. 9 (2002): 607.

⁸² Richard H. Hycner, “Some Guidelines for the Phenomenological Analysis of Interview Data,” in *Qualitative Research*, edited by A. Bryman and R. G. Burgess (London: Sage, 1999), 3:156.

⁸³ Clark Moustakas, *Phenomenological Research Methods* (California: Sage, 1994), 10.

paradigm and methodical processes of this research. Afterwards, the different historical parts of the problem are investigated through a circular process, where evidences are collected and analysed using the following approaches:

1. Literature Review is used throughout the study to delineate the scope of investigation, identify gaps in knowledge and uncover prejudices (section 1.2 and chapter 4).
2. Contextual thick descriptions of some Pre-Islamic, Islamic and Post-Islamic urban case studies and architectural examples.
3. A social survey and interviews are used to examine the shift in the Post-Islamic perception/experience of traditional Sūqs (sections 7.4 and 7.6.2).
4. Narrative Analysis of poetic and literary sources are used to trace and establish some possible thematic connections between the Arabian Sūq's different experiences and descriptions, as provided by its first-hand users—poets, travellers, novelists to interviewees—at a specific time and place (sections 5.4, 6.4 and 7.5).
5. Thematic Coding of emergent themes in Arabian poetry, literature, interviews and case studies (sections 5.6, 6.6 and 7.7).
6. Idea Networking is used to identify the clusters of meaning and/or dialogical relationship between identified themes. (section 3.5).
7. Synthesis of historical findings and cross-examining them against current presuppositions, in order to test the findings' validity and to reveal any unforeseen meanings that previous studies possibly missed (section 8.4).

By deploying this range of methods, the intent is to expand the outline of the hermeneutic circle, enabling the research to move synchronically as well as diachronically between the three historical horizons in question. This forms the basis of a constructive hermeneutic practice, which intends “to make it possible to explain, interpret or understand the nature of the phenomena within its scope.”⁸⁴ Finally, it is important to note that an integral expansion of the research rests on

⁸⁴ Max Van Manen, “Phenomenology of Practice,” *Phenomenology and Practice* 1, no.1 (2007): 18-20.

the appendices and illustrations, which are provided to reinforce the visibility, credibility and plausibility of evidences (sections 3.4.4 and 3.6).

1.9 Scope, Limitations and Delimitations

The proposed research aspires to offer an alternative reading of the Arabian Sūq, using Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics as its theoretical paradigm and methodological approach. This approach is common in some disciplines, yet it is still not fully explored in architectural and urban theory/practice, "due to the prevalence of other, more positivistic methods – particularly those that extract theoretical knowledge from fragments of culture without reference to the overall picture, and then attempt to reapply these findings into a 'passive' world," as claimed by Christian Frost.⁸⁵ Accordingly, the research questions, as Gadamer and Frost do, the ability of a wholly empirical approach to fully grasp the intricacies of socio-urban phenomena, particularly non-Western ones. Even though the research does not deny the presence of some shared universal meanings, it still argues that the social channels leading to such meanings are coloured by the particularity characterizing a phenomenon's historical, cultural, geographic and political settings. For this reason, the research makes use of the Sūq to identify some of these meaning-making channels in Arabia, arguing that the study of Arabia's socio-urban relations must seek the region's own set of humanistic categories whose points of references probably differ from those of the West.⁸⁶ Hence, the research deploys a pool of primary and secondary sources to identify, examine and analyse the different structures and patterns of meaning-making that seem to underpin an Arab's experience of traditional Sūqs at different historical periods. These sources include urban maps, architectural examples, historical records, illuminated manuscripts, travel journals, philosophical treatises, poetry, novels, ritualistic activities and everyday

⁸⁵ Christian Frost, *Time, Space, and Order: The Making of Medieval Salisbury* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2009), xv

⁸⁶ Hans Georg Gadamer, "The Future of European Humanities," in *Education, Poetry and History: Applied Hermeneutics*, edited by Dieter Misgeld and Graeme Nicholson, translated by Lawrence Schmidt and Monic Reuss (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), 194-195.

dialogues. While information on urban case studies is ample, particularly those related to Arabia's Islamic period, there were some limitations in the number of references that discuss the role of Pre-Islamic Arabia in developing Sūq practices. Another limitation is the dearth of English translation of some important Arabic references, particularly Pre-Islamic poetry and contemporary fiction. Yet, this last limitation is marginal here, given the author's ability to translate parts of these works whenever needed. In this regard, it is important to note that the emphasis on language and linguistic evidences in this research grounds its validity on 1) Gadamer's theoretical emphasis on the role of language in shaping cultural understanding (section 2.4), and 2) on some current views that define an Arab today as someone who speaks Arabic and shares some sympathetic views with the challenges and aspirations of Arabic countries.⁸⁷ Even though the research intends not to challenge this definition, it still attempts to examine its historical (in)consistency, arguing that the idea of Arab-ness cannot be understood away from the historical/geographic situation it adheres to or from the different prejudices encircling the perception of an Arab today.

Acknowledging the presence of many political, economic, technological, social, cultural, ideological and mythic sub-dialogues encircling the region's expansive socio-urban story, the thesis attempts to minimize the risk of over-interpretation or unsupported generalization by focusing on three historical phases of Sūq-ness: Pre-Islamic, Islamic and Post-Islamic (section 1.3). In turn, the set of physical evidences employed at each stage was chosen on the basis of these evidences' ability to reflect the region's range of geopolitical, social and cultural differences at a particular historical position. Similarly, poetic references were chosen on the basis of their ability to demonstrate the diversity of the region's social groups, philosophic/ideological orientations and individual motives at different historic and spatial contexts. While there exists an amalgam of other evidences that could have been examined, the PhD word count limitation dictated the careful scrutiny and filtration of evidences, based on their commensurability with the subject and the objectives of the research, their value as symbolic

⁸⁷ Dwight Fletcher Reynolds, *Arab folklore: A Handbook* (Greenwood Press, 2007), 1.

constituents of Arab culture and on their purported impact on the development of Arabian thought. So, the research claims to be grounded in modern hermeneutics, in the way that it seeks to situate the different topics in question within a specific ‘horizon’ of meaning that is relevant to the context of Arab culture. Accordingly, the research set its delimitations following these general insights:

- 1) The idea of Arab-ness here deals not with issues of ethnicity but with some socio-cultural meanings, practices, memories and rituals that seem particular to the Arab region at a particular historical context. So, the research examines whether and how the definition of Arab-ness changed at different historical situations by investigating the structures and patterns of socio-urban experience that encircled these changes, if any.
- 2) The coming of Islam is an important marker delineating the different historical and geographic periods of the research. For, Islam is a religion that flourished in the Arabian Peninsula during the 7th century AD and was exported to various spots of the world. Yet, the research is not concerned with Islam as a matter of faith but with the effects of some Islamic meanings and practices on the perception and participation in Sūqs.

1.10 Conclusion

The chapter introduced the subject of this thesis, outlining the aim of the research, its questions, objectives, theoretical framework and methodology. The chapter also explored the different subject areas that this research adheres to and proposed that Gadamer’s hermeneutics is a better-suited approach for investigating the subject. The following chapter extends this proposition and builds on some of the methodological issues discussed here, presenting an overview of Gadamer’s arguments and philosophical debates, and explaining why his theories are considered better suited for understanding the socio-urban relevance of Arabian Sūqs.



2

Chapter Two

Theoretical Framework and Methodology Gadamer's Hermeneutics

2.1 Introduction

Since the research's theoretical framework is based on Hans Georg Gadamer's *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, chapters 2 and 3 will explain why Gadamer's hermeneutics is deemed suitable for the proposed research; and will discuss the different methodological approaches employed to investigate the subject. This chapter will focus on explaining Gadamer's hermeneutic philosophy, his position in relation to other philosophical stances in social theory and his arguments on the nature of aesthetic experience. Chapter 3 will extend these discussions in relation to the research's methodological approach, proposing different methods that could be employed as a practical application of his theories.

2.2 Heidegger's Phenomenology, Constituents and Definitions

Gadamer's work is considered a continuation of Heidegger's line of thought. In the introduction of *Being and Time* (1993), Heidegger outlines the concerns of phenomenological research, arguing for its significance as "a concept of method... [that] does not characterize the 'what' of the objects of philosophical research in terms of their content but the 'how' of such research."⁸⁸ Accordingly, Heidegger identifies '*phainomenon*' and '*logos*' as the two main constituents of the 'science of phenomena.'⁸⁹ Starting with the first constituent, Heidegger explores the origin of the Greek term *phainomenon* in relation to the verb *phainesthai*, meaning to show itself.⁹⁰ Hence, he argues that the phenomenon brings itself to light by revealing something to someone depending on his/her standpoint, where,

*Phenomenon – the self-showing in itself – means a distinctive way something can be encountered. On the other hand, appearance means a referential relation in beings themselves such that what does the referring (the making known) can fulfil its possible function only if it shows itself in itself – only if it is a phenomenon. Both appearance and semblance are themselves grounded in the phenomenon, albeit in different ways.*⁹¹

Accordingly, Heidegger defines the concept of *logos*, after Aristotle, as a form of *apophainesthai* or as seeing something that is being talked about.⁹² This definition suggests a synthesis between 'what is being seen' and 'what is being talked about,' allowing the perceiver to discover the truth content of a phenomenon within the context of its variable sensory experiences and its accompanying discourses.⁹³ For Heidegger, *logos* allude to a form of reason or judgment, where, "something has become visible in relation to something else, in its relatedness, [hence] logos acquire the meaning of a relationship with and a relating to

⁸⁸ Martin Heidegger, "Being and Time," in *Basic Writings*, revised ed., edited by David Farrell Krell (New York: Harper Collins, 1993), 72.

⁸⁹ Heidegger, "Being and Time," 73.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid., 76.

⁹² Ibid., 74.

⁹³ Ibid., 76.

something.”⁹⁴ This brings forth the relevance of phenomenological research, particularly to architecture/urbanism, where the ideas of spatiality and contextuality, in other words situatedness and/or orientation, acquires further meanings. Heidegger points to such meanings in the following discussion,

*Space is not in the subject, nor does the subject observe the world ‘as if’ it were in space. Rather the subject correctly understood ontologically, Da-sein, is spatial in a primordial sense... As circumspect taking care of things in the world, Da-sein can change things around, remove them or ‘make room’ for them only because ‘making room’ belongs to its being-in the world... Space is initially discovered in this spatiality with being-in-the-world.*⁹⁵

2.3 Gadamer’s Hermeneutics in the Context of Contemporary Theory

Prior to investigating Gadamer’s theories on the social dimension of aesthetic experience, it is important to clarify some of the alleged weaknesses in his treatise. The aim is not to defend him against the many critiques encircling his theories but to explain, as proposed by Richard J. Bernstein, how can his philosophy, “be extremely fertile and illuminating when applied to current issues concerning cross-cultural dialogue.”⁹⁶ According to Bernstein, Gadamer’s philosophy is an appropriate approach if one seeks to overcome “the myth of the framework,” whether this framework refers to an academic tradition or to the set of cultural differences that divides us and makes understanding a hard task to achieve among people belonging to incommensurable cultural or linguistic traditions.⁹⁷ As shall be discussed in sections 2.3.1-2.3.3, this same value was critically received by the likes of Jürgen Habermas, representing the critical school of thought, E. D. Hirsch, representing the positivistic approach, and Jacques Derrida, representing the postmodern mainstream.

⁹⁴ Heidegger, “Being and Time,” 80.

⁹⁵ Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, translated by Joan Stambaugh (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010), 108.

⁹⁶ Richard J. Bernstein, “The Hermeneutics of Cross-Cultural Understanding,” in *Cross Cultural Conversation: Initiation*, edited by Anindita Niyogi Balslev (USA: The American Academy of Religion, 1996), 33.

⁹⁷ Bernstein, “The Hermeneutics of Cross-Cultural Understanding,” 34.

2.3.1 The Gadamer – Hirsch Debate

During the first half of the 20th century, a major problem facing the historical social sciences was fundamentally a question of explanation versus interpretive understanding.⁹⁸ Gadamer, as well as Habermas, were considered major opponents to the prevailing positivist thought. One of their most important debates targeted Hirsch's intentional-ism, whose book *Validity in Interpretation* (1969) defended Schleiermacher's theories against those of Gadamer.⁹⁹ Unlike Schleiermacher, Hirsch's work does not base understanding on psychological divination, but rather takes Husserl's phenomenological concept of intentionality as a start point for recovering authorial intention or what he refers to as 'verbal meaning.'¹⁰⁰ Even though an analysis of Hirsch's work is beyond the scope of this research, his ideas on the 'share-ability' of verbal meanings are important here. According to Georgia Warnke, "Hirsch no longer defines meaning as a private act but claims rather that it is embodied in language and limited by linguistic conventions."¹⁰¹ He further argues that "the meaning of a text is a shared language, shared in the sense that it is no one person's possession but is rather a common view of a subject-matter."¹⁰² In a way, Hirsch's method neglects social variations and cultural differences in reading texts, assuming that the authors' linguistic structures—not to mention dialects—must be seen as constant variables in a scientific equation, despite historical, ideological, political or economic variances. A critique of this view is forwarded by Gary Brent Madison, who argues that this positivist position is misleading and highly problematic, given its emphasis on the invariance of meaning, suggesting that our historically constructed interpretations are constantly replaced, or "relegated to the garbage dump of history."¹⁰³ Madison also notes that Hirsch's position on creativity

⁹⁸ Jack Mendelson, "The Habermas-Gadamer Debate," *New German Critique* 18 (Autumn 1979): 50-51.

⁹⁹ Eric Donald Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967).

¹⁰⁰ Warnke, *Gadamer*, 44.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid., 48.

¹⁰³ G. B. Madison, *The Hermeneutics of Postmodernity: Figures and Themes* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1990), 21.

confines freedom to the necessity of “scientific research,” given Hirsch’s argument that scientists’ path to freedom and creativity is dictated through their very own findings, neglecting the effects of scientific development and social needs as catalysts for invention. Still, Madison concludes that Hirsch’s theory, while a reliable method for examining scientific objects, ignores the role of subjectivity and historicism in the social sciences.

2.3.2 The Gadamer – Habermas Debate

Both Gadamer and Habermas questioned the positivist belief in science as a universal method on the basis that it “absolutizes a model of theory-formation and practical application which is suited for technological knowledge but excludes other modes of cognition.”¹⁰⁴ For this reason, Habermas initially believed that Gadamer’s concept of ‘*verstehen*’ is a better suited method for the historical and/or social sciences. Still, Habermas saw Gadamer’s reliance on Heideggerian ontology a weakness that grants “the positivists control over the definition of scientific method.”¹⁰⁵ Defending his position, Gadamer **claimed** that his intention is not to present a prescriptive methodology with truth and method as opposing poles, but to demonstrate that hermeneutic experience precedes scientific methodology since, “*verstehen* could function within science, [yet] it cannot restrict itself to that domain.”¹⁰⁶ He also noted that Habermas misunderstood the role and intent of the concept of ‘fusion of horizons,’ limiting the scope of hermeneutics to linguistic translation, as opposed to “understanding in an appropriate way of what happens in the medium of language.”¹⁰⁷ For, Habermas assumed that the fusion of horizons is based on one’s ability to masterfully articulate thoughts through a formal linguistic model that could be accessible by others, who might or might not share the same language (section 2.4.1). While Habermas’s endorsement of dialogue as one part of understanding is correct, it still falsely assumes that Gadamer’s work hypothesizes a “linguistically

¹⁰⁴ Mendelson, “The Habermas-Gadamer Debate,” 46.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 57.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 58.

¹⁰⁷ Warnke, *Gadamer*, 111.

articulated consciousness [that] determines the material practice of life.”¹⁰⁸

Warnke’s comments on this point, arguing that,

*Habermas illegitimately restricts the range of hermeneutic understanding to express truth... Hermeneutics, however, deals with prejudices and hence not simply with the positions an individual or society can articulate but with the assumptions and expectations those positions include.*¹⁰⁹

Another important critique forwarded by Habermas was that of ideology, claiming that Gadamer’s hermeneutic application is incapable of establishing a credible social theory fully informed of the many-faceted problems that ideological, political and economic distortions impose on people’s everyday experience. Moreover, Habermas saw in Gadamer’s concepts of prejudice and authority an abstracted form of Enlightenment dualism, which mediates tradition through threat and reward. For these reasons, Habermas believed that Gadamer’s utopian aspirations for change are inhibited by tradition itself and that his interpretive theory fails to realize that, “an adequate understanding of society is an account of how the economic system actually works whatever the society’s prejudices and self-understanding.”¹¹⁰ Habermas’s emphasis on ideology and critical reflection was again criticized by Gadamer, who argued that “hermeneutics is not only aware of hidden dimensions of meaning and not only itself capable of revealing them; in fact, the task of revealing hidden dimensions of meaning and, hence, of exposing ideology is precisely its own.”¹¹¹ Yet, Gadamer believed that these ‘hidden dimensions’ are only ‘visible’ once they present themselves to our linguistic horizon, where they are weighed against our own prejudices. Gadamer’s discusses this point further through his concept of ‘the productivity of temporal distance,’ which to him plays an integral role in developing historical studies by means of differentiating between ‘true’ and ‘false’ prejudices.¹¹² He further explains that,

¹⁰⁸ Habermas, *On the Logic of the Social Sciences*, 289.

¹⁰⁹ Warnke, *Gadamer*, 113.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 116.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 135-136.

¹¹² Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 298.

*Temporal distance is not something that must be overcome. This was, rather, the naïve assumption of historicism, namely that we must transpose ourselves into the spirit of the age, think with its ideas and its thoughts, not with our own, and thus advance towards historical objectivity. In fact, the important thing is to recognize temporal distance as a positive and productive condition enabling understanding.*¹¹³

The last frontier of the Habermas-Gadamer debate revolves around some psychological assumptions that Habermas saw in Gadamer's concepts of situatedness and dialogue, which to Habermas suggest a form of utopianism that does not suffice for an objective understanding of, "causal connections, unconscious motivations and unintended consequences."¹¹⁴ Accordingly, Habermas argued that Gadamer's hermeneutic approach was lacking a supplementary 'quasi-objective explanatory science,' such as that provided through the psychoanalytic model.¹¹⁵ Again, Gadamer argued that Habermas's position fails to see that both critical theory and psychoanalysis are intrinsically hermeneutic fields incapable of escaping the influence of tradition. Habermas himself admitted to this when he questioned his own critical reference system in *On the Logic of the Social Sciences* (1988), rephrased by Warnke as,

*why is the claim that a given social self-understanding contains ideological elements not itself simply an interpretation, a situated view that itself relies on certain assumptions, values and expectations? How does it offer more than a particular historical perspective and if it does not how does it escape from the confines of the hermeneutic situations?*¹¹⁶

Here, it is important to note that even though Gadamer's early works rarely points at the intervention of power, politics or capital in the understanding of social phenomena, some of his later works such as, "The Relevance of the Beautiful" (1986), "The Future of European Humanities" (1992), "Towards a Phenomenology of Ritual and Language" (1992) and "The Artwork in Word and Image" (2002) suggest some critical concerns in his hermeneutic philosophy.¹¹⁷

¹¹³ Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 298.

¹¹⁴ Warnke, *Gadamer*, 120.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 124.

¹¹⁷ "The Relevance of the Beautiful," in *The Relevance of the Beautiful and Other Essays*, edited by Robert Bernasconi, translated by Nicholas Walker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

2.3.3 The Gadamer – Derrida Debate

During the second half of the 20th century, Gadamer's hermeneutic philosophy was questioned once again, yet this time by Jacques Derrida, who critiqued its metaphysical thinking model, which to him does "not address the concerns of deconstruction."¹¹⁸ Gadamer relegated Derrida's critique to this latter's rejection of contextuality and his misunderstanding of many important concepts regarding the scope and process of philosophical hermeneutics. While Gadamer did not deny the importance of psychoanalysis as one important application of hermeneutic thinking, particularly when the text is bombarded with many hidden motives, he still questioned Derrida's ability to differentiate between hermeneutics, which seeks "a meaning that is intended but never given in advance," and psychoanalysis, which attempts to grasp a meaning that "is hidden and not yet made conscious."¹¹⁹ Through this statement, Gadamer defines the scope of hermeneutics as one concerned with consciousness and the conscious interpretation of ideas.

Another problem pointed by Gadamer in this debate was centred on Derrida's misunderstanding of the concept of 'presence' or '*logos*.' Following Heidegger, Gadamer defines *logos* through Aristotle's theories on the functions of speech and through Plato's concept of dialogue, arguing that "thinking always has to ask whether the words and concepts in which it operates, in all the multiplicity of their spreading themselves out and always joining together, create every new contexts of meanings."¹²⁰ As such, Gadamer establishes some affinity with

1986); "The Future of European Humanities," in *Education, Poetry and History: Applied Hermeneutics*, edited by Dieter Misgeld and Graeme Nicholson, translated by Lawrence Schmidt and Monic Reuss (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992); "Towards a Phenomenology of Ritual and Language (1992)," in *Language and Linguisticality in Gadamer's Hermeneutics*, edited by Hans-Georg Gadamer, translated by Lawrence K. Schmidt (Maryland: Lexington Books, 2000); "The Artwork in Word and Image," in *The Gadamer Reader: A Bouquet of the Later Writings*, edited by Richard E. Palmer (Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2007).

¹¹⁸ Hans Georg Gadamer, "Hermeneutics Tracking the Trace (On Derrida)," in *The Gadamer Reader: A Bouquet of Later Writings*, edited by Richard E. Palmer (Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2007), 376.

¹¹⁹ Piotr Dehnl, "Deconstruction and Hermeneutics: On the Controversy between Jacques Derrida and Hans-Georg Gadamer," in *Discussing Modernity: A Dialogue with Martin Jay*, ed. Dorota Koczanowicz, Leszek Koczanowicz and David Schaufner (New York: Rodopi, 2013), 44.

¹²⁰ Gadamer, "Hermeneutics Tracking the Trace (On Derrida)," 383.

Derrida's work, which seeks to break with the traditional understanding of texts by creating a framework of new possibilities. Yet, Gadamer finds the deconstruction endeavour lacking in dialogical dimension, given its rootedness in the French tradition of sign theory that is based on "a distant observer of the infinite network of all signs and of all references to other things," hence neglecting that we, as immersed beings, also play a role in the way these signs interact with each other.¹²¹ For this reason, Gadamer believes that Derrida's approach of random trace-hunting can create problems that are rectifiable through a historical understanding of the overall context in which the trace becomes a clue pointing to the right direction. This approach should also acknowledge that,

*Every sentence is not a unity in itself... it belongs within a unity of sense that gives the text its inner tension and its own particular tone ... Tone and emphasis arise from an ungraspable movement, a movement back and forth between each other in a being with each other ... the unity of text or a conversation rests upon the being-together of people with each other.*¹²²

In this way, Gadamer defines hermeneutics as the constant movement between parts and whole. This movement, or what he refers to as 'Hermeneutic Circle,' causes constant tensions in one's interpretive understanding, leading to the expansion of one's horizon towards another. Gadamer refers to the process of such expansion as 'Fusion of Horizons' (section 3.2.3).

2.4 Gadamer's Aesthetic Theories: An Overview

Since one of this thesis's objectives is to portray how Gadamer's hermeneutic philosophy can assist in formulating a holistic methodological approach for identifying and analysing some of the social meanings embodied in the Arabian Sūq's lived experience at different historical situations, the following overview will focus on Gadamer's writings and concepts that build up to this understanding. The first section will explore some general concepts and arguments in Gadamer's hermeneutic philosophy, while the second section will focus on those writings that explain his allegories on aesthetic experience.

¹²¹ Gadamer, "Hermeneutics Tracking the Trace (On Derrida)," 388.

¹²² Ibid., 395.

2.4.1 Gadamer on the Guiding Humanistic Concepts

Central to Gadamer's theory are the notions of 'historical effects,' lived experience and language. These three concepts play an important role in his hermeneutic philosophy, which assumes that social phenomena and their experience-based interpretations are contextual in nature and thus cannot be understood in isolation from the historical situation that generated them. Still, Gadamer constantly argued that every historical situation is limited to its own frame, or horizon, and that, "the consciousness of situation can never be full, since we are always its integral part."¹²³ Through the idea of horizon, Gadamer advances a model of investigation that holds 'close' and 'distant' parts of a problem as indivisible structures of understanding. The closer parts of the problem include the bulk of knowledge and prejudices that we have on a subject, while the more distant ones are meanings that are yet-to-be-revealed. Such revelation takes place through a circular motion between the parts and the whole, whose dialogical interaction allows the mediation of past and present.¹²⁴ Gadamer refers to this movement as the Hermeneutic Circle (section 3.2), which is,

*determined by the constant mutual influence of its parts and its whole, a huge horizon is influenced by a smaller and vice versa. When we try to understand someone, we never lose ourselves, but approach a more general ground that represents our common space. Similarly, as we interpret texts, we must not fix the meanings, so that the meaning of the whole could be outlined. Particular meanings give a new sense to the whole, but, on the other hand, the unfolding of the whole presents us with a new self-understanding.*¹²⁵

The form of knowledge engendered from such movement is both practical and theoretical. Still, Gadamer emphasizes the importance of practical knowledge in the social sciences, arguing that '*phronesis*,' or practical knowledge, can assist in finding the proper measures for interpreting phenomena and/or text, by means of 1) positioning them within their temporal and spatial frames, 2) identifying the

¹²³ Duška Dobrosavljević, "Gadamer's Hermeneutics as Practical Philosophy," *Philosophy, Sociology and Psychology* 2, no. 9 (2002): 610.

¹²⁴ Warnke, *Gadamer*, 183.

¹²⁵ Dobrosavljević, "Gadamer's Hermeneutics as Practical Philosophy," 611.

different prejudices and/or presuppositions encircling their current perception, and 3) ‘sympathetically understanding’ the different social dialogues and practices that were developed around their particular situation.¹²⁶ Through these measures, hermeneutics “bridges the temporal distance that separates the interpreter from the text and overcomes the alienation of meaning that the text has undergone.”¹²⁷ Similarly, Gadamer finds in Aristotle’s concept of ‘*ethos*’ another integral praxis for understanding (section 5.1), since ‘*ethos*’ operate within the sphere of “human institutions and human modes of behaviour.”¹²⁸ In this way, the idea of lived experience becomes of particular importance here, given Gadamer’s argument that *Erfahrung*, as opposed to *Erlebnisse*, establish the different ways people experience reality, and that such experience is in itself a critical process, where old perceptions and beliefs are constantly revised in the light of new ones.¹²⁹ Many facets of such process **are** reflected in social dialogues, poetry and artworks, whose proper historical interpretation can assist in revealing important aspects of particular social experiences and their meaningfulness.

This idea presents the basis of Gadamer’s work, who sees language as the medium of hermeneutic experience, or the “vehicle through which real subject matters reveal themselves.”¹³⁰ For, Gadamer’s argument that ‘being that can be understood is language’¹³¹ points to the verballity of the process of experience, which is not necessarily limited to the sphere of translation, as misunderstood by Habermas, but includes all form of understanding, conversation and dialogue.¹³² Accordingly, it could be understood that language for Gadamer works iconically, constantly pointing beyond itself to some binding social norms or ‘*ethos*.’ This

¹²⁶ Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 310-321.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 310.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 311.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 347-348. In another section (page 385), Gadamer differentiates between *Erlebnisse* and *Erfahrung*, stating, “To understand what a person says is, as we saw, to come to an understanding about the subject matter, not to get inside another person and relive his experiences (*Erlebnisse*). We emphasized that the experience (*Erfahrung*) of meaning that takes place in understanding always includes application.

¹³⁰ Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 385.

¹³¹ Joel Weinsheimer, “Translator’s Preface,” in *Truth and Method*, 2nd Revised Edition, by Hans Georg Gadamer (London: Continuum, 2004), xi-xx.

¹³² Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 385-386; Brice R. Wachterhauser, *Beyond Being: Gadamer’s Post-Platonic Hermeneutical Ontology*, (Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1999), 98.

idea is expressed in Gadamer's views regarding the linguisticity of hermeneutic objects, like text and artworks, which to him represent some form of 'linguistic tradition.' In this regard, he notes,

Linguistic tradition is tradition in the sense of the word—i.e., something handed down. It is not just something left over, to be investigated and interpreted as a remnant of the past. What has come down to us by way of verbal tradition is not left over but given to us, told to us—whether through direct retelling, in which myth, legend and custom have their life, or through written tradition, whose signs are as it were, immediately clear to every reader who can read them.¹³³

This statement forms the basis of the research's choice and reliance on poetic/literary evidences, all of which have been employed for their purported value as some of Arabia's most important cultural bearers, for their aspired ability to 'change and widen' our horizon about the Sūq's past and present significance, and for their possible contribution to our continuous knowledge and memory of the Sūq.¹³⁴ In this way, the cross-examination of architectural remnants against written heritage would assist, as Gadamer argues, in formulating a deeper understanding of social phenomena by means of opening up the hermeneutic task to the four humanistic praxes that guide individual and communal development. These praxes are: *Bildung*, *sensus communis*, taste, and judgment.

▪ *Bildung*

Gadamer considers the concept of *Bildung* as a primary aspect of human development, which he defines as "rising up to humanity through culture."¹³⁵ *Bildung* in definition stems from two dimensions: the external appearance (as in formation, and natural form) and culture, (as in cultivating one's talents and capacities). However, the notion of *Bildung* is an ongoing internal process of cultivation and development, through which man frees himself from some particular social prejudices to **assume** a stance of universality. In this process, man achieves the true sense of *Geist* (spirit), which Gadamer defines after Hegel as,

¹³³ Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 391.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 392.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 9.

“the task of man.”¹³⁶ However, Gadamer still argues that it should not be assumed that through such acts of development one loses the essence of his particular culture. On the contrary, in this process man’s memory plays the role of a reservoir, accumulating experiences and cultivating sensibility towards what is ours as opposed to what is others’.

▪ *Sensus Communis*

The second guiding concept for Gadamer is *sensus communis*, which he defines after Vico as, “what gives the human will its direction is not the abstract universality of reason but the concrete universality represented by the community of a group, a people, a nation, or the whole human race.”¹³⁷ To him, *sensus communis* along with *Bildung* grant man and society the ability for rational judgment and critical knowledge. Yet, unlike Vico, Gadamer argues that *sensus communis* is not a source of unreflective judgment since it works within a set of cultural and social norms, finding its root in society’s inherited values and developing through individual as well as social communication. Gadamer grounds his arguments here on Aristotle’s concept of *phronesis*, which assumes that practical experience and practical judgment establish individual understanding as much as society’s appreciation of what is good. Accordingly, Gadamer considers *sensus communis* as “an element of moral being” showing a major divergence from the Kantian doctrine that narrows *sensus communis* to a judgment of taste.¹³⁸

▪ Taste

Gadamer discusses his third and fourth guiding concepts, taste and judgment, through Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason*. Here, Gadamer argues that the task of interpretive understanding, or *verstehen*, is to widen the limited horizons of both subject (interpreter) and object (text, image etc.), holding them into a

¹³⁶ Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 11.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 19.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 29-31.

mutual ground that is devoid of the disinterestedness presumed by Kant. Through such process, the interpreter links the object of interpretation to,

*an intelligible relation with his own cultural milieu...Here the practical meaning of verstehen becomes apparent. Because it is immanently linked to application, verstehen is itself a moment in the historical process which serves to mediate tradition, i.e., to preserve and transform it. Interpretation is a moment in the life of effective-history. Our current horizon is constantly being formed through fusions in which our prejudices are confirmed, concretised, and altered.*¹³⁹

In this way, Gadamer's concept of the 'Fusion of Horizons' becomes a reflection of the historical/contextual situated-ness of both subject and object and their interaction within a reciprocate relationship. For this reason, Gadamer emphasizes the role of contextuality and lived experience and subdues the role of taste, which to him is "a testimony to the mutability of all human things and the relativity of all human values."¹⁴⁰

▪ Judgment

In *Truth and Method*, Gadamer discusses the idea of judgment through what he refers to as "aesthetic consciousness," or "the experiencing centre from which everything considered art is measured."¹⁴¹ The problem of this concept to Gadamer, as he explains, lies in its abstracted definition of aesthetics, resulting in many dualities between beautiful appearance as opposed to reality; and aesthetic form as opposed to content. Still, Gadamer believes that the abstraction inherent in aesthetic consciousness has a positive role, bringing forth 'pure art and allows it to exist so in its own right.'¹⁴² This advances another form of aesthetic judgement, or what Gadamer refers to "aesthetic differentiation."¹⁴³ Given its extensive role of scrutiny and taste purification to all that is artistically valuable, aesthetic differentiation acquires a simultaneous quality, playing the role of both quality measure and historical bridge. Gadamer uses architecture here as an

¹³⁹ Mendelson, "The Habermas-Gadamer Debate," 56.

¹⁴⁰ Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 51.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 74.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

example to validate this argument, stating that “the great works of architecture, at least, continue to exist in the life of the present as a living witness of the past.”¹⁴⁴ For this reason, many such great works no longer belong to their direct cultural sphere alone but become part of a universal aesthetic culture.¹⁴⁵

2.4.2 Aesthetic Experience as Play, Symbol & Festival

In light of the above theoretical arguments, the following will present some of Gadamer’s views on the nature and processes of aesthetic experience. These views are extracted from *Truth and Method* (1960) and “The Relevance of the Beautiful” (1986), where Gadamer advances the allegories of play, festival and symbol as the core of what he refers to as ‘the anthropological basis’ of aesthetic experience.¹⁴⁶ First, Gadamer sees some similarity between aesthetic experience and the act of play. Gadamer defines play as ‘a free impulse,’ which intends no specific end beyond the reciprocate movement between the players, who are engaged in the ‘playing along’ of the game. The spectators of the game have an important role in Gadamer’s allegory, presenting themselves as contributors to the playing act, first through their own expectations and cultural prejudices, and second through the artwork’s dialogical capacity, which imposes on the spectators a form of ‘sacred seriousness’ that necessitates participation.¹⁴⁷ Jean Grondin believes that this dialogical capacity lies not in the mere appearance of the artwork alone, “but lies in the fact that one is touched by a proposition, an address, an experience, which so captures us that we can only play along.”¹⁴⁸ Still, Gadamer argues that play is controlled by some specific spatial and temporal guidelines, as well as the participants’ willingness of partake in the ‘playing along,’ allowing the process to bridge “a not yet semantically articulated form of

¹⁴⁴ Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 75.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 76.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 102-152; “The Relevance of the Beautiful,” 28-29.

¹⁴⁷ Jean Grondin, “Play, Festival and Ritual in Gadamer: On the Theme of the Immemorial in his Later Works,” in *Language and Linguisticality in Gadamer’s Hermeneutics*, edited by Hans-Georg Gadamer, translated by Lawrence K. Schmidt (Maryland: Lexington Books, 2000), 44.

¹⁴⁸ Grondin, “Play, Festival and Ritual in Gadamer,” 45.

communication and world communication.”¹⁴⁹ Yet, Gadamer opposes the idea that the aesthetic experience’s goal is to uncover the original intentions of the artist or to critique the method of production through a set of conventional guidelines, given that all the former elements constitute the ‘playing of’ the game, expanding the participants’ perception in order to “collect together utterly separate sensory impressions,” while simultaneously establishing the truth dimension of objects as they enter their visual and cognitive horizon.¹⁵⁰

This proposition is best portrayed through Gadamer’s second analogy of the symbol, which he defines as “interplay between showing and concealing.”¹⁵¹ According to Gadamer, the idea of the symbolic has an important relationship with aesthetic experience, given the understanding that a symbol is a meaning that is yet-to-be-revealed. Gadamer believes then that symbolic capacity of an image, an architectural icon or a poem lies in its power to engage through an abundance of underlying meanings. For this reason, Gadamer argues that works of art are presentational and not representational and that the “the coming-into-appearance” of an artwork’s meaning is more than a mirror of its original, becoming an intensified version of reality.¹⁵² In this respect, an artwork’s truth content for Gadamer is not a matter of authorial intention alone but is also related to the quality of artistic creation and its temporal frame. Gadamer discusses this idea through what he refers to as “the ontological temporality of aesthetic experience,” which **suggests** that since our encounter with an artwork is contemporaneous and that its appearance is always partial, then the artwork points beyond itself towards its yet-to-be-revealed quality. Gadamer affirms that, “the symbolic does not simply point towards a meaning, but rather allows that meaning to present itself.”¹⁵³ The historically effective process of ‘reading’ symbols allows for a deeper understanding of unfamiliar aesthetic experiences and expands our horizon

¹⁴⁹ Lawrence K. Schmidt, “Participation and Rituals: Dewey and Gadamer on Language,” in *Language and Linguisticality in Gadamer’s Hermeneutics*, edited by Hans-Georg Gadamer, translated by Lawrence K. Schmidt (Maryland: Lexington Books, 2000), 138.

¹⁵⁰ Gadamer, “The Relevance of the Beautiful,” 28-29.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 33.

¹⁵² Hans-Georg Gadamer, J. E. Malpas, Ulrich von Arnswald, and Jens Kertscher, *Gadamer’s Century: Essays in Honor of Hans-Georg Gadamer* (Illinois: MIT Press, 2002), 61.

¹⁵³ Gadamer, “The Relevance of the Beautiful,” 34.

to imaginatively reconstruct our understanding of Others. Through symbolism, as much as in play, aesthetic experience emerges as an act of self-representation that “belongs not only to this particular content or object but rather stands for the meaningful whole of life.”¹⁵⁴

Gadamer expands this last statement through his analogy of the festival, where he extends the boundaries of individual aesthetic experience towards the sphere of social participation. Here, Gadamer defines the festival as, “an experience of community and represents community in its most perfect form.”¹⁵⁵ Similar to play, the festival is a temporal phenomenon, a suspension of work and an arena for pleasurable communal events, which emphasize “the fact that here we are not primarily separated but rather gathered together,” hence preventing us from “falling into private conversations and private, subjective experiences.”¹⁵⁶ In this way, aesthetic experience points to a truly genuine aspect of community, becoming a representation of some social realities relating to this particular society’s bulk of historically accumulated meanings. Accordingly, festive participations allow the temporary dissolution of individual differences and **reassert** one’s belonging to something larger than oneself. Here, Gadamer argues that the fact that each individual belongs to a distinct traditional background exercises some form of autonomy on the way he perceives and appreciates art, establishing tradition as an act of “transmission rather than conservation,” where past experiences are adapted into a present situation rather than being preserved without social negotiations.¹⁵⁷ Through these allegories, Gadamer establishes a theoretical platform from which it would be possible to examine, analyse and understand aesthetic experiences, such as those witnessed in Sūqs. Through these experiences it would be possible to portray how “past and present interpenetrate in the translation of ancient [forms].”¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁴ Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 61.

¹⁵⁵ Gadamer, “The Relevance of the Beautiful,” 39.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 40.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 49.

¹⁵⁸ Hans Georg Gadamer, “Image and Gesture,” in *The Relevance of the Beautiful and Other Essays*, edited by Robert Bernasconi, translated by Nicholas Walker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 78-79.

2.5 Conclusion

The chapter discussed Gadamer's philosophical paradigm, highlighting its commensurability with this research's aim and objectives. The following chapter will build upon some of the concepts discussed here, particularly, those of the 'Hermeneutic Circle' and 'Fusion of Horizons,' and will explore the different methods that can be employed in conjunction with these two larger interpretive approaches. By doing so, the following chapter will attempt to formulate a constructivist hermeneutic model that can assist in investigating the development of an Arabian Sūq's socio-urban meaning at different historical situations.



3

Chapter Three

Research Design and Methods On Criteria, Processes and Evidence Collection

3.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the research's methodology. It starts by discussing the research's qualitative approach in relation to the overall research design and its hermeneutic paradigm, followed by a detailed discussion of the employed methods for collecting and analysing evidence. The chapter concludes with the ethical considerations relevant to the research, together with the principles of trustworthiness, credibility and rigor.



3.2 Research Orientation, Theoretical Framework and Paradigm

This research follows the guidelines of qualitative research, focusing on the principles of hermeneutic practice. Since the research attempts to fulfil its aim and objectives following Gadamer's argument that "there is no single method on which all research could be modelled due to the linguistically mediated nature of our contact with reality and the necessarily perspectival and limited understanding this engenders," this general overview of qualitative research methods will focus on those approaches that can best explain the phenomenon in question and answer the main research questions.¹⁵⁹ An important criterion for adopting these methods is the hermeneutic principle of the fore-structures of understanding, which as shall be explained, aims not at defending or refuting a prior position—or an existing prejudice—but rather to describe the "testing logic that explains the manner in which evidence functions."¹⁶⁰ So, the following introduces the general principles of qualitative research, then discusses the research's design in relation to the theoretical framework and to the particular guidelines of hermeneutic practice applied in this research.

3.2.1 Qualitative Research General Guidelines and Methods

In *Architectural Research Methods* (2013), Linda Groat identifies five major features of qualitative research, "1) emphasis on natural settings; 2) focus on interpretation and meaning; 3) focus on how the respondents make sense of their own circumstances; 4) use of multiple tactics; and 5) significance of inductive logic."¹⁶¹ Groat also emphasizes the qualitative research's holistic scope and its open-ended nature, which requires prolonged contact with the subject, dependence on visual or literary evidence and the importance of the "researcher as a measurement device."¹⁶² When discussing the phenomenological approach to

¹⁵⁹ Wachterhauser, B. R., "History and Language in Understanding," in *Hermeneutics and Modern Philosophy*, edited by B. R. Wachterhauser (NY: State University of New York Press, 1986), 33.

¹⁶⁰ Michael E. Patterson and Daniel R. Williams, *Collecting and Analysing Qualitative Data: Hermeneutic Principles, Methods and Case Studies* (Illinois: Sagamore Publishing, 2002), 24.

¹⁶¹ Linda Groat and David Wang, *Architectural Research Methods*, 2nd ed. (New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons, 2013), 218-220.

¹⁶² Groat and Wang, *Architectural Research Methods*, 223.

interpretation, Groat defines its aim after John Creswell as, “to clarify the essential or underlying meaning of experience, where experiences contain both the outward appearance and inward consciousness, memory, image and meaning.”¹⁶³ Phenomenological research in particular requires in-depth engagement with the phenomenon in terms of its physical formalistic organization and its mental impact on the users, which is possibly accessible through people’s stories, myths, poetry and rituals. To achieve this in-depth engagement, the research combines a wide range of qualitative methods, like case studies, thick descriptions, narrative analysis, thematic coding and interviewing. Sections 3.3 and 3.4 will give an overview of some of these methods, explaining why and how they will be employed in this research.

3.2.2 Research Theoretical Model: The Hermeneutic Circle

Following Gadamer’s concepts of the ‘Hermeneutic Circle’ and ‘Fusion of Horizons’ (section 1.5), the research based its investigation on a network of partial interpretations, each of which is believed to have affected the perception and experience of the Sūq at different spatial/temporal situations. The research’s design model (Fig. 4) is built around the idea of a ‘Hermeneutic Circle,’ whose historical parts examine various types of data (section 3.3), for purposes of uncovering some social meanings that orchestrated the Sūq’s lived experiences. Explaining the process of a ‘Hermeneutic Circle,’ Heidegger explains,

*we are compelled to follow the circle... To enter upon this path is the strength of thought, to continue on it is the feast of thought, assuming that thinking is a craft. Not only is the main step from work to art a circle like the step from art to work, but every separate step that we attempt circles this circle.*¹⁶⁴

Arguing for the merits of the Hermeneutic Circle, Mats Alvesson and Kaj Sköldböck claim that,

¹⁶³ Groat and Wang, *Architectural Research Methods*, 227-228.

¹⁶⁴ Martin Heidegger, “Origin of the Work of Art,” in *Art and Its Significance: An Anthology of Aesthetic Theory*, 3rd edition, edited by Stephen David Ross (New York: State University of New York Press, 1994), 255.

*to understand presupposes pre-understanding, but at the same time pre-understanding is an obstacle to understanding. To prevent this from developing into a vicious circle, the existential hermeneutics advocate a constant alternation between merging into another world and linking back into our own reference system. By means of this movement back and forth, we can successively come to an understanding of the unfamiliar reference system, something which also leads to the gradual revising and/or enriching of our own: there is a fusion of horizons.*¹⁶⁵

Opposingly, Judith N. Shklar believes that the circle is a problematic metaphor, given its assumption that there is a central point that is neither occupied by the interpreter nor by a definite organizing agent. She believes that “the hermeneutic circle makes sense only if there is a known and closed whole, which can be understood in terms of its own parts.”¹⁶⁶

Influenced by many such arguments, the research started with the proposition that the phenomenon of the Sūq is a ‘whole,’ around which a series of partial historical interpretations could be formulated. Incorporating Gadamer’s humanistic principles of History-Language-Lived experience as the main research variables, it was further proposed that the development of these variables during the different historical parts creates a perpetual multi-layered “movement between the whole [*Sūq*] and the parts [*historical situations*].”¹⁶⁷ The main contribution of this model resides in the possibility that it can uncover the poetic capacity of the Arabian Sūq, revealing more about the different historical situations that affected its physical appearance and modes of social participation. Through this model, the research was also able to incorporate several methods and evidence types that can assist it to answer the main questions and to fulfil its objectives (section 1.6). The choice of methods, as shall be discussed in section 3.4, was based on these methods’ commensurability with the research’s questions and objectives; and on their ability to extrapolate, analyse and synthesize themes across variable

¹⁶⁵ Kaj Sköldberg and Mats Alvesson, *Reflexive Methodology: New Vistas for Qualitative Research*, 2nd ed. (Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2009), 120.

¹⁶⁶ Judith N. Shklar, "Squaring the Hermeneutic Circle," *Social Research: An International Quarterly* 71, no.3 (2004): 658.

¹⁶⁷ Lawn, *Gadamer*, 47.

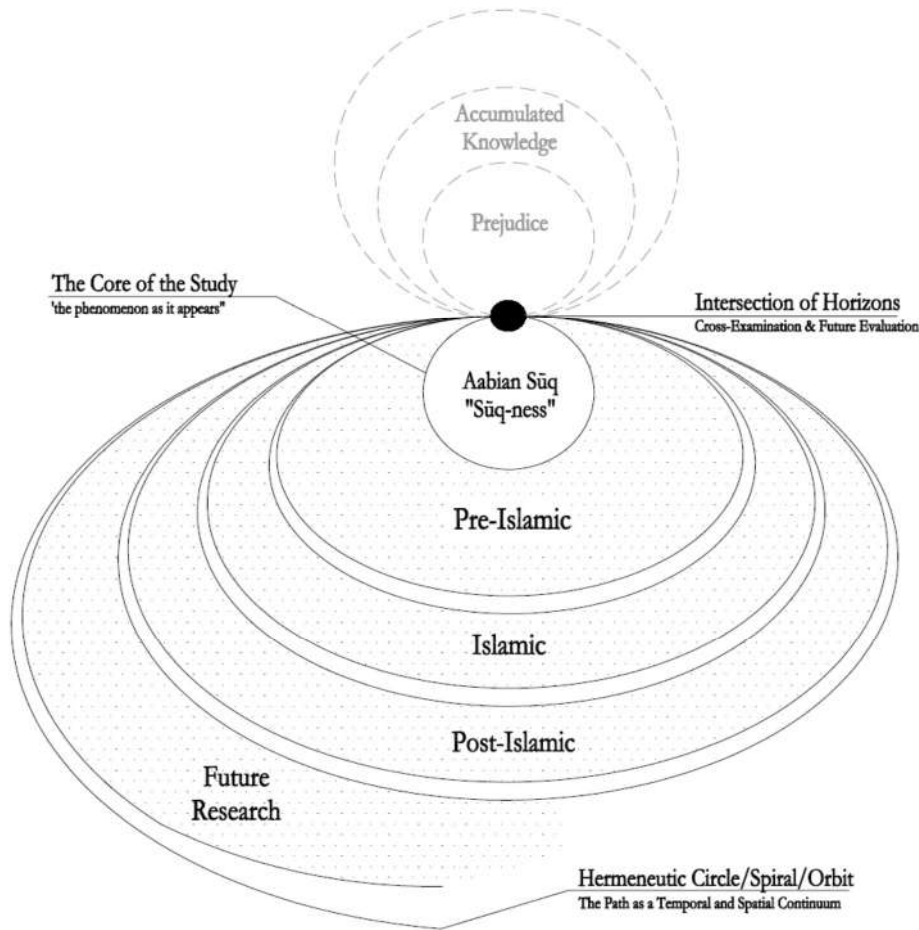


Figure 6 - Diagram of the research's theoretical application of the Hermeneutic Circle, by author.

historical evidences. As for evidence types, the employment of urban/architectural artefacts and visuals (pictures, performances and graphs) in conjunction **with** poetic/written text granted the research different levels of visibility, transforming existing artefacts from generators of historical fragments and imagined socio-cultural settings **into** an intelligible whole.¹⁶⁸

3.2.3 Research Paradigm: The Hermeneutic Approach to Interpretation

The Hermeneutic Circle describes the circular movement between the fore-structures of understanding and the different historical parts affecting a specific phenomenon. The fore-structures here refer to the bulk of 'textual evidence' that make up the totality of the phenomenon's epistemological basis.

¹⁶⁸ Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 392.

For this reason, a hermeneutic approach of analysis requires the contribution of the interpreter, who is expected to create an oscillating ‘dialogue’ between the subject’s accumulated prejudices and the ‘new’ interpretations brought forth from its historical parts.¹⁶⁹ The anticipated outcome of this hermeneutic process according to Kvali is that, “the closer determination of the meaning of the separate parts may come to change the originally anticipated meaning of the totality, and again this influences the meaning of the separate parts.”¹⁷⁰ In contrast to other qualitative paradigms, the hermeneutic approach emphasizes the importance of individual cases and specific encounters. This emphasis is grounded on “the ontological assumptions of a context-dependent reality,” which stresses that “meaning changes across time, cultures and individuals.”¹⁷¹ So, hermeneutics seeks not generalized conclusions but rather explanations about particular situations that reflect the interpreter’s position and his engagement with the ‘text’ at hand. For, hermeneutic interpretation is a constantly evolving process, acknowledging the changes in context, technology and the development of new insights.¹⁷² Yet, this does not assume that hermeneutic research is a matter of biased divination, but rather a “rigorous and systematic application of meaningful thought beginning with a particular perspective (the fore-structure of understanding) and progressing through a cyclical analysis.”¹⁷³

Accordingly, the research based its interpretations on a broad literature review on the subject, culminating into the research’s body of secondary sources, or fore-structures; and two distinct pools of evidence (section 1.7, Fig. 5). The first pool relied chiefly on the physical evidence identified through archaeological remnants, architectural buildings, photographs and urban maps; while the other pool was extracted from the different social interpretations revealed through Arabic poetry, films, novels, myths, folktales, memoirs, interviews and a social survey. By collecting this range of evidences, the research attempted to

¹⁶⁹ Patterson and Williams, *Collecting and Analysing Qualitative Data*, 24.

¹⁷⁰ S. Kvale, *Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing* (California: Sage Publications, 1983), 185.

¹⁷¹ Patterson and Williams, *Collecting and Analysing Qualitative Data*, 25.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Ibid., 27.

“understand the nature of the setting,” acknowledging that “meaning is socially constructed by individuals in interaction with their world,” as stated by Merriam.¹⁷⁴ Evidence collection and its processes, in terms of choice and different sampling/interviewing techniques, will be fully explored in sections 3.4 and 3.5. Since the investigation spans across variable historical eras, Pre-Islamic and Islamic evidences were extracted from existing architectural remnants as much as from poetic/literary descriptions of the period in question; while Post-Islamic evidences were drawn from ‘newly’ developed urban spaces, contemporary literature, in-depth interviews and a survey.

3.3 Research’s Design and Application Overview

A critical part of qualitative research is hinged on the credibility of examined evidence and the rigor of its triangulation process. This section will explore these issues, discussing first the overall research design. This is followed by a detailed description of evidence collection, documentation and analysis methods (sections 3.3 and 3.4), highlighting their merits in enhancing the trustworthiness, credibility and dependability of the research’s methodological application (section 3.6). As illustrated in Fig. 4 (section 1.7), the research’s ‘Hermeneutic Circle’ approaches the subject from two standpoints: 1) the Arabic definition of the term ‘Sūq’ (sections 1.3), and 2) reviewed literature on the subject (sections 1.2, 1.4 and 4.3-4.6). Chapter 1 discussed some of the gaps in reviewed literature and methods. Chapter 4 **extends** this review, offering in-depth discussions of some available studies on Arab Sūqs today. By doing so, the chapter **highlights** some prevailing presuppositions on the subject and their reprimands on our current understanding of Arabian Sūqs.

The subsequent steps of the investigation **attempt** to reconcile some of these gaps and prejudices by looking into the different historical effects that contributed to the Sūq’s physical development and its socially-constructed meaning over time. Here, the circle **moves** away from the horizon of

¹⁷⁴ Sharan B. Merriam, *Qualitative Research in Practice: Examples for Discussion and Analysis* (San Francisco: John Wiley and Sons, 2002), 3-5.

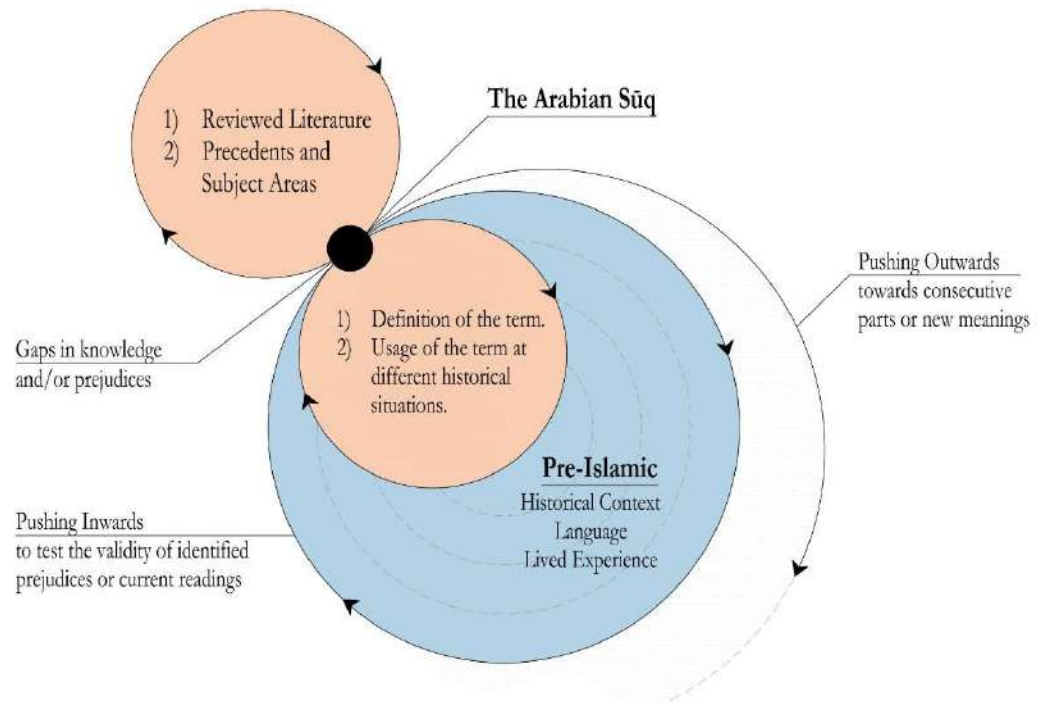


Figure 7 - Research Design model, showing partial illustration of the Hermeneutic Circle's inward and outward movement between the parts and variables.

contemporary knowledge towards some distant historical meanings that were possibly forgotten or missed. By projecting outwards (Fig. 7), the first circular motion **seeks** the subject's earliest known beginnings during the Pre-Islamic era. This outward movement **makes** use of the development of the research's variables of history-language-lived experience to uncover the space's original manifestation during the Pre-Islamic era and to push the interpretive process inwards again for purposes of re-assessing what **was** previously **known** against what is revealed through this first partial analysis. This circular investigation is repeated again in the two remaining historical parts, Islamic and Post-Islamic, concluding with a synthesis of findings in chapter 8. By doing so, the research applied its second interpretive approach of 'Fusion of Horizons' repeatedly and systematically,

- 1) At the end of each historical stage (section 5.7, 6.6 and 7.7) by effectively coding, analysing and triangulating the themes identified through the circles of History-Language-Lived Experience.
- 2) At the end of the project by synthesizing the findings of all three historical stages (chapter 8).

While this design model held the overall research together as a unity of interrelated parts, the thematic analysis applied at the end of each historical stage validated partial findings by perpetually cross-examining themes against new findings. This way, the research attempted “to describe the experience of moving dialectically between the parts and the whole.”¹⁷⁵

3.3.1 Collection of Physical and Poetic Evidence

Following the guidelines of qualitative and hermeneutic research, evidence collection and documentation processes for each set of evidences was constantly revised in light of new findings. This required the writing and re-writing of urban case studies, which were purposefully chosen in relation to three main criteria: 1) their ability to demarcate the overall geographic makeup of the historical era, reflecting the chronological expansion and/or retraction of Arabia’s physical space, 2) their persistent development over time, hence their ability to demonstrate the physical as well as the mental displacement of meaning, and 3) the authenticity of primary resources. These criteria ensured that the interpretation process not only establishes what is claimed to be an Arabian understanding of being-in-space and being-with-others, but also minimizes the effects of unsupported generalizations. Similarly, the choice of poetic/literary evidence was also purposefully chosen in order to expand the symbolic content of the urban case studies, demonstrating how,

*language always changes in the light of the endless dialogical exchanges within the context of tradition and history.. these changes are beyond the control of individuals, linguistic groups and any agency seeking to control the movement of language.*¹⁷⁶

Accordingly, the research investigated the development of Arabic language’s spatial imageries during the three periods in question, for purposes of revealing

¹⁷⁵ Paterson and Higgs, “Using Hermeneutics as a Qualitative Research Approach in Professional Practice,” 343-344.

¹⁷⁶ Lawn, *Gadamer*, 85. The Expressivist tradition is concerned with how language expresses the essence of being human and rejects the notion that language is a ‘representational grid’ reflected upon the world through some autonomous power. According to Gadamer, the expressive capacity of language is safeguarded by convention and social agreement, becoming the medium through which any understanding of the world is formulated.

whether and how the Sūq's understanding changed at each historical situation. By doing so, the research also attempted to explore Arabia's "worldly knowledge with all its contents that are stated in language and interpreted in a language community."¹⁷⁷ The juxtaposition of poetic and urban/architectural evidence anchored the research process, collected evidence and interpretive methods to the larger theoretical framework, suggesting, after Gadamer, that lived experience encompasses both the physical and the mental as integral praxes that delineate its extent, perspective and meaningfulness.

3.3.2 Triangulation of Evidences

Considering the above, the analysis of each of historic stage was based on the triangulation of evidence in relation to both primary and secondary resources. By doing so, the research attempted to evaluate existing knowledge of the Sūq, setting aside inconsistencies and suggesting new meanings. Even though evidences for each stage varied, reflecting the idiosyncrasies of different historical positions, it was important to adhere to a well-defined process to effectively triangulate physical evidence against some reciprocated in-time narratives. Figure 8 illustrates this process, portraying the three triangulated variables of each stage—History, Language and Lived experience. Consequently, each analysis (sections 5.6 – 6.6 – 7.7) first explored the general historical conditions encircling the era in question, as understood from secondary sources, then investigated the physical development of the Sūq's structure through archaeological remnants, urban maps or illuminated manuscripts, and finally cross-examined these findings in relation to recurrent in-time descriptions and rituals, as discussed through poetry, literature, travellers' journals, media or interviews. Through a continuous triangulation of 'what is seen' against 'what is said' (section 2.2), the research identified several possible interpretations that were used to explain the phenomenon's development at each historical stage. Birks and Mills define

¹⁷⁷ Hans Georg Gadamer, "Towards a Phenomenology of Ritual and Language (1992)," in *Language and Linguisticality in Gadamer's Hermeneutics*, edited by Hans-Georg Gadamer, translated by Lawrence K. Schmidt (Maryland: Lexington Books, 2000), 24.

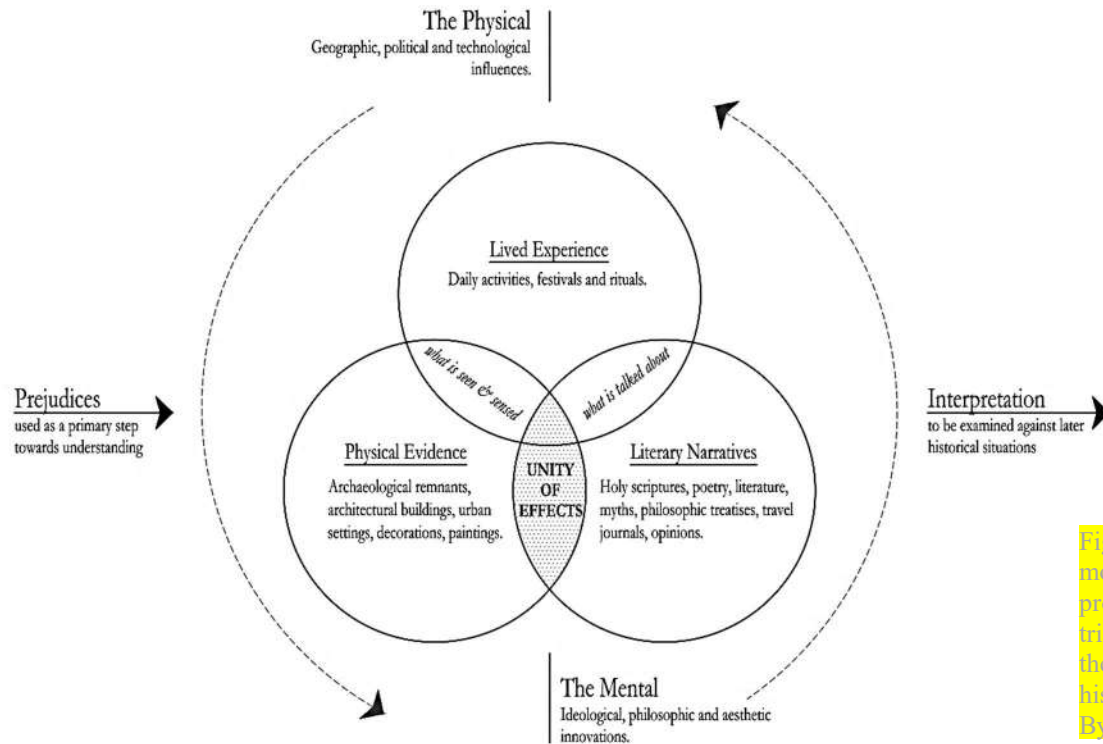


Figure 8 - Diagrammatic model showing the proposed process for triangulating evidences at the end of each partial historical interpretations. By author.

this approach as ‘inference to the best explanation,’ which is,

*a type of reasoning that begins by examining evidence and after scrutiny of these evidence, entertains all possible explanations for the observed evidence, and then forms hypotheses to confirm or disconfirm until the researcher arrives at the most plausible interpretation of the observed evidence.*¹⁷⁸

To reach this ‘most plausible interpretation,’ the research deployed multiple tactics that are commonly used in qualitative research for describing, cross-examining and coding evidence (section 3.5.3).¹⁷⁹ According to Groat and Wang,

*Qualitative research is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.*¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁸ Melanie Birks and Jane Mills, *Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide*, 2nd ed. (Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2012), 94.

¹⁷⁹ Groat and Wang, *Architectural Research Methods*, 215-234.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 218.

One of the rationales for using a combination of research methods, according to Krueger, is that it strengthens the research design and grants it credibility.¹⁸¹ The choice of these tactics depended on the nature of the evidence in relation to the research's question(s), objectives and overall aim. The following sections offers a detailed review and justification of the employed methods.

3.4 Evidence Types and Collection Methods

The research sought a wide range of evidences and collection methods. An important source of knowledge here was the literature review that culminated into the research's bulk of secondary sources, in other words Pre-Knowledge. The importance of the literature review was threefold. First, it was used to acquaint the researcher on the range of existing knowledge that is currently available on the subject. Second, it warranted the researcher a thorough knowledge of the specificities related to the nature and meaning of the problem, by shedding light on some existing gaps in knowledge that are affecting the subject's current understanding. Third, it assisted the researcher in uncovering different types of prejudices on the subject, including her own. In this way, the literature review contributed to the definition and redefinition of the aim and objectives of the research in relation to the body of existing literature that supported, validated and substantiated it.¹⁸² Through literature review, the research was also able to identify and select the most relevant primary evidence, which can be categorized into urban case studies, poetry, visuals and interviews. The following will discuss each of these sources and methods.

3.4.1 Urban Case Studies

The discussion of urban case studies, which constitute the bulk of physical evidence in this research, include the different descriptions provided by archaeological reports, travellers' journals and historical records. These

¹⁸¹ Dreyer Krueger, *An Introduction to Phenomenological Psychology*, 2nd ed. (London: SAGE Publication, 2002), 29.

¹⁸² Paterson and Higgs, "Using Hermeneutics as a Qualitative Research Approach in Professional Practice," 347.

discussions also include many secondary sources, like contemporary studies, which offer various readings of the Arabian public space and its architectural qualities, expanding the interpretive possibilities of the research. The descriptions provided by these sources was complimented by ample visual evidence, including maps, illustrations, illuminated manuscripts and photographs, in order to highlight the “many aspects of human experiences that might otherwise go unnoticed.”¹⁸³ The choice of the case studies depended on the previously discussed criteria (section 3.3.1) and on the importance of these examples in relation to Arabia’s urban and social development as a whole.

3.4.2 Witten Sources from Periods (Poetics)

An integral part of the research dealt with the collection, translation and analysis of Arabic poetry and literature that described an Arabian Sūq’s experience at different historical **situations**. Evidence was collected from variable primary sources, including the Holy Quran, major Arabic anthologies, Islamic philosophical treatises, Arabic poetry/novels and travellers’ journals. Arabic sources, as opposed to their English translation, were given precedence, and a professional Arabic/English translator was consulted to verify the researcher’s accuracy of translation. The choice of this set of textual evidence, as discussed in section 2.4.1, was based on these evidences’ popularity and on their value as integral constituents of Arabia’s cultural heritage. Locating these evidences followed a rigorous process, beginning with a thorough search of the term Sūq and its equivalent definitions in Arabic poetry search engines, like Adab.com. Afterwards, the results were filtered according to the term’s intended meaning and symbolic denotations. These initial results along with the poets’ biographies were categorized according to the broader historical stages in question. All these entries were then counterpoised with a more focused search in some of the most renowned Arabic anthologies, such as al-Asfahani’s *Kitab al-Aghany*, Shawky Dayf’s *Tareekh al-Adab al-‘Arabi* and the different publications of contemporary

¹⁸³ Paterson and Higgs, “Using Hermeneutics as a Qualitative Research Approach in Professional Practice,” 347.

poets.¹⁸⁴ By doing so, the research intended 1) to have the broadest possible exposure of all available Arabic poetry on Sūqs, 2) to ensure the textual accuracy of evidences and their origin, 3) to identify the evidence's historical timeline, and 4) to describe the poets' individual positions/motives. Afterwards, duplicate ideas and unverified information were omitted, retaining only those poetic evidences that were deemed historically accurate by most sources and those that present the broadest geographic/cultural expanse of the Arab region at each historical stage. By adhering to these guidelines, the research attempted to reinforce the literary evidence's credibility, adopting Polkinghorne argument that "the analysis of linguistic evidence makes use of hermeneutic reasoning. Hermeneutic understanding uses processes such as analogy and pattern recognition to draw conclusions about the meaning content of linguistic messages."¹⁸⁵

3.4.3 Maps, Graphics and Performances

Visual evidences in this research include urban maps, illuminated manuscripts, paintings, illustrations, photographs and videos. The choice of this set of evidence depended on the findings of the literature review and case studies. Since visual evidence were used here "to deepen and thicken interpretation, as images evoke emotions and imaginative understanding," searching for visual evidence was based on a binary model, which intended the expansion of some specific meanings through imagery.¹⁸⁶ This is applied in all parts of the research, particularly for explaining some urban developments, highlighting specific architectural features and for providing a visual connection to some poetic descriptions or performances (Jahin's Puppet show in section 7.6.1). According to Laestadius, visual data allow "researchers to engage with images/videos, captions, hashtags, and comments in the manner that users envisioned when they created

¹⁸⁴ Al-Asfahani, *Kitab al-aghany* (كتاب الأغاني), Arabic (Cairo: Dar al-Kutub al-Masriyyah, 1936); Shawky Dayf, *Tareekh al-adab al-'Arabi: Al-'asr al-jahili* (تاريخ الأدب العربي: العصر الجاهلي), Arabic, 11th ed. (Cairo: Dar al-Ma'aref, 1960).

¹⁸⁵ Donald E. Polkinghorne, *Narrative Knowing and the Human Sciences* (New York: The State of New York University Press, 1988), 6.

¹⁸⁶ Kim, *Understanding Narrative Inquiry*, 222.

the content,” and contribute to a better familiarity with the topics in discussion and people’s attitudes towards them.¹⁸⁷

3.4.4 Social Survey and Interviews

As noted in section 3.2.3, interviews and a social survey were employed as evidence collection methods in this research. Each of these methods was used to find evidence that can assist in locating a change in the Sūq’s social meaning during the Post-Islamic era. The movement from general social perceptions (social survey) to in-depth personal experiences (interviews) granted the research an opportunity to expand its interpretive horizon and to validate its findings. For, the social survey intended to examine the view point of “the average person, situation or instance of the phenomenon in question,” gathering information from a large random sample of respondents who live in Dubai and are willing to share their opinion about the city’s embodied meanings.¹⁸⁸ Contrastingly, the interviews intended to get an in-depth understanding of the socially-manufactured meanings, shared memories and experiences of traditional Arabian Sūqs today. This required a smaller group of purposefully selected participants, whose descriptions and stories were used to identify any possible displacements in the meaning of Sūq-ness today. The choice of these two techniques was based on the range of benefits, uses and drawbacks outlined in Fig. 9.

In line with each of these two methods’ uses and intentions, the sampling/recruitment techniques varied in terms of sample size, age group and ethnicity. According to Robert K. Yin, Random Sampling refers to, “selecting a statistically defined sample of units—can be done if your study intends to generalize its findings numerically to the entire population of units.”¹⁸⁹ Contrastingly, Purposeful Sampling refers to a evidence collection method, which involves a conscious selection of participants to include in an interview, Focus

¹⁸⁷ Linnea Laestadius, “Instagram,” in *The Sage Handbook of Social Media Research Methods*, edited by Luke Sloan and Anabel Quan-Haase (Los Angeles: Sage, 2017), 582.

¹⁸⁸ Merriam, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, 77.

¹⁸⁹ Robert K. Yin *Qualitative Research from Start to Finish* (New York: The Guilford Press, 2011), 89.

Method	Use	Benefits	Drawback	Source
Social Survey	Data Collection Technique using structured questionnaires.	Describe characteristics of a set of cases. Locate causes of phenomena. Identify variations between cases.	Generalized causal relationships. Inherently quantitative, factual and unimaginative.	David de Vaus, <i>Surveys in Social Research</i> , 5th ed. (Australia: Allen and Unwin, 2002), 3-5.
Interview (Philosophical Hermeneutic or PH)	Data collection technique that can adopt a versatility of approaches. PH interviews are mostly unstructured and dialogical in nature, intending to uncover personal attitudes, memories and perceptions on specific daily experiences.	In-depth descriptions of personal experiences. PH interviews allow the reciprocation of ideas between researcher and interviewee. PH interviews are concerned not only with the story being told but also with language, physical gestures and voice intonations.	Cannot be generalized. Uses a very small sample. Must be conducted face-to-face. Long and detailed sessions. Researcher's bias and interference.	Roxanne K. Vandermause and Susan E. Fleming, "Philosophical Hermeneutic Interviewing," in <i>International Journal of Qualitative Methods</i> , Vol. 10, Issue no. 4, pp. 367-377 (2011)

Figure 9 - Table comparing different interviewing strategies, benefits and shortcomings. It also includes most prominent references on the subject.

Group study or a survey, as explained by Merriam.¹⁹⁰ This technique is associated with two important concepts: Snowballing and Convenience Sampling. Yin explains that Snowballing refers to “selecting new evidence collection units as an offshoot of existing ones—can be acceptable if the snowballing is purposeful, not done out of convenience.”¹⁹¹ Contrastingly, Convenience Sampling to Merriam refers to selecting a sample that is readily accessible given some “time, money and location” constraints.¹⁹²

The sampling variations discussed above were employed to study the different perceptions of traditional Sūqs during the Post-Islamic era. Each of these sampling techniques was used according to the needs and processes of the interviewing method in question. First, the social survey, which targeted a random sample, was distributed via *Facebook* and *Instagram* to explore Dubai’s overall social perception in relation to its marketed brand. Since the intent of the social survey was to gather information from a large and diverse group of participants who live in the city, with no restrictions in terms of age, nationality or gender, the

¹⁹⁰ Sharan B. Merriam, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation* (San Francisco: John Wiley and Sons, 2009), 76-80

¹⁹¹ Yin, *Qualitative Research from Start to Finish*, 89.

¹⁹² Merriam, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, 79.

ten-questions form was distributed to all *Facebook* and *Instagram* pages that bear the term ‘Dubai’ in its title, intending the possibility of a Snowballing effect. The main purpose of the survey was to compare the respondents’ descriptions with the city’s advertised qualities (section 7.3.3). So, the questionnaire was drafted with several criteria in mind, including 1) the use of simple and direct language, 2) limited number of questions in order to encourage more *Facebook* or *Instagram* users to complete the survey and to forward it to ‘friends,’ 3) combination of scale-rating, open-ended and visual questions to diversify the results, and 4) the use of digital collection and online analysis applications for ease of storage, retrieval and decoding. The survey gathered over 220 responses, including qualitative descriptions and statistical results that assisted the researcher in validating the evidence against Dubai Government’s demographic information.

This was followed by nine in-depth interviews with traditional Sūq goers in Dubai and in Cairo. While there are common characteristics of interviews across qualitative research methodologies, the phenomenological hermeneutic interview espouses an open-ended approach that is “more interpretive than reductionist in nature,” allowing a dialogical intersection between the researcher and the interviewee’s stories.¹⁹³ In response to these guidelines, the sample was purposefully chosen based on two criteria. First, the researcher wished to have a balanced number of male/female participants as means for avoiding unsupported gender-related generalizations. Second, the researcher sought different Arab nationals of different age-groups, in order to test the persistence, or not, of some larger themes across different Arab countries. After acquiring Ethical clearance from DMU, the researcher made several visits to traditional Sūqs in Dubai and Cairo to locate possible participants. Upon their acceptance to take part, the participants were contacted and given a copy of the proposed questions, Participants’ Information Sheet and Participants’ Consent Forms.¹⁹⁴ The interview venue was decided by the participant to optimize the comfortable casual intent of

¹⁹³ Roxanne K. Vandermause and Susan E. Fleming, “Philosophical Hermeneutic Interviewing,” *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 10, no. 4 (2011): 370.

¹⁹⁴ A copy of these documents is attached in Appendix 11.A.

the process. Before the start of the interview itself, participants were again reminded of the voluntary nature of the study and their right to withdraw at any point. Audio recording was used during the whole process for purposes of effective storage and later transcription/coding. The interviews of participants who preferred to speak in Arabic were translated by the researcher and transcribed in English. As for the interviewing process itself, the researcher tried to remain faithful to the general topics already prescribed in the Interview questions sheet, still allowing each of these topics to be remodelled, expanded or deferred in response to the participant's answers. So, the researcher attempted to adhere to the conventions of phenomenological interviewing by allowing the natural uninterrupted narration of the participants' stories, experiences and memories, where "all questions flow from the dialogue as it is rather than having been determined in advance."¹⁹⁵

Evidence collection, storage and analysis for both interviewing techniques followed similar steps, which could be summarized as follows:

- 1) Acquiring required Ethical Approval from DMU.
- 2) Creating the questionnaire's template and distributing it.
- 3) Purposefully choosing participants, as recommended by Merriam and Krueger, hence interviewing only those who "have had experiences relating to the phenomenon to be researched."¹⁹⁶
- 4) Explaining the purpose of the study and its relation to the overall research.
- 5) Explaining the procedure of the research, its risks and benefits, while also ensuring that the identity of participants will remain anonymous.
- 6) Stressing on the voluntary nature of participation and their ability to withdraw at any point of the study.
- 7) Acquiring a written consent for including the results as part of the final research paper, without which the results of specific entries have been eliminated during decoding and drafting of the final thesis.

¹⁹⁵ Howard R. Pollio, Tracy Henley and Craig B. Thompson, *The Phenomenology of Everyday Life: Empirical Investigations of Human Experience* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 30.

¹⁹⁶ Krueger, *An Introduction to Phenomenological Psychology*, 150.

- 8) Storing evidence as hardcopy, soft copy and online for easy retrieval and cross-referencing, with each entry given a specific code.
- 9) Delineating units of meaning in relation to the larger themes extracted, analysed and interpreted in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.
- 10) Clustering of units of meaning according to themes.
- 11) Interpreting evidence in relation to the overall intent of the study.
- 12) Repeating the studies until a point of saturation is reached.¹⁹⁷

3.5 Analysis, Triangulation and Coding Methods

3.5.1 Contextual Descriptions (Thick Descriptions)

Contextual descriptions were used to explain the physical appearance of the Sūq at variable historical situations, following Babbie and Mouton's recommendation that the purpose of social studies is to describe situations and events.¹⁹⁸ Through this method, the researcher attempted to offer thick and accurate descriptions of the chosen urban case studies within their historical context, demonstrating the effects of particular situations on the development of the Arabian built environment. According to Clifford Geertz a 'thick description' is "rich if it provides abundant interconnected details, and possibly cultural complexity, but it becomes thick description if it offers direct connection to cultural theory and scientific knowledge."¹⁹⁹ In turn, the value of thick, or contextual, descriptions here was hinged on its ability to identify and explain the different historical, spatial and socio-cultural effects encircling an Arabian Sūq's experience at each historical situation. Accordingly, the research described the contextual relevance of the case studies using two primary sources, 1) written evidence, like reports from archaeological expeditions, travellers' diaries and historical records that explain the Sūq's building strategies, processes, in-time technologies or ideological/political interventions; and 2) visual evidence, such as

¹⁹⁷ Merriam, *Qualitative Research*, 183.

¹⁹⁸ Earl R. Babbie and Johann Mouton, *The Practice of Social Research* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 80.

¹⁹⁹ Robert E. Stake, *Qualitative Research: Studying How Things Work* (New York: The Guilford Press, 2010), 49.

photographs, maps, paintings and manuscripts that were used to deepen the understanding of the Sūq's appearance at specific historical eras.

3.5.2 Narrative Analysis

Narrative Analysis is used to make sense of particular types of experiences in relation to their historical, cultural and social context. According to Polkinghorne, Narrative Analysis is a method that “makes explicit the operations that produce its particular kind of meaning, and to draw out the implications this meaning has for understanding human existence.”²⁰⁰ Since interpretation and analysis “work in tandem because we analyse narrative evidence in order to develop an understanding of the meanings our participants give to themselves, to their surroundings, to their lives and to their lived experiences through storytelling,” the research sought this method to identify some Sūq-related meanings that seem to underpin an Arab's experience and understanding of Sūqs at different historical contexts. The research attempted to do so through a range of Arabic sources, including the Holy *Quran*, poetry, literature, philosophy, myths and folktales.²⁰¹ Given the variety of literary sources, the research adopted a thematic approach for organizing these different ‘textual’ narratives into themes that were later coded and analysed for purposes of showing whether and why the Sūq's meaning and experience have changed during different historical eras. This approach established the research's dependability in relation to collected evidence, where emergent themes were constantly revised in light of the cross-examination of ‘what is seen’ against ‘what is said.’ This triangulation model (section 3.3.2) allowed the research to formulate a series of partial interpretations, revealing a possible pattern of meaning-making and a series of cultural references that were socially shared and negotiated over different historical periods. In doing so, the research followed Polkinghorne's general model of Narrative Analysis, which is concerned with restoring a coherent story through the plotting of evidence (actions, events and happenings) “into a temporally organized whole

²⁰⁰ Polkinghorne, *Narrative Knowing and the Human Sciences*, 6.

²⁰¹ Jeong-Hee Kim, *Understanding Narrative Inquiry: The Crafting and Analysis of Stories as Research* (Singapore: SAGE Publications Inc, 2016), 189-190.

with a thematic thread.”²⁰² According to Kim, the purpose of Polkinghorne’s model is to explain “why and how things happened. The way they did, and why and how our participants acted in the way they did.”²⁰³ Acknowledging these broader guidelines, the choice and configuration of literary evidence responded to Polkinghorne’s model and criteria, which 1) focus on the context to show the meaning of lived experience, 2) constantly move between parts and whole, and 3) carefully arrange disconnected evidence to appeal to the reader and to fill in the gaps between events.²⁰⁴ The research attempted to fulfil these criteria using two thematic graphic models (section 3.5.3): Focus Coding Diagram (FCD), and Idea Networking Diagram (IN).

3.5.3 Thematic Coding and Idea Networking

The triangulation of evidences takes place at different instances of the research through a multi-tiered thematic analysis process (sections 5.7, 6.6 and 7.7). First is thematic coding, which is the process of organizing collected evidence into a “framework of thematic ideas.”²⁰⁵ Following Mills and Birks’s three-stage process, the research’s ‘initial’ coding stage gathered and compared primary evidence, in here physical evidence and literary narratives, for purposes of allocating general themes.²⁰⁶ This was followed by a ‘focused’ coding stage, where further abstractions were established “around a core variable.”²⁰⁷ In this stage, “theory development is advanced through the identification of relationships between categories as analysis progresses,” allowing the research to uncover some persistent themes and possible displacements in meaning.²⁰⁸ The last stage of the process was theoretical coding, which allowed the research to advance its analysis of the different narratives at play, “enhancing the explanatory power of

²⁰² Kim, *Understanding Narrative Inquiry*, 197.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 197-198.

²⁰⁵ Graham Gibbs, *Analysing Qualitative Data* (Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2008), 38.

²⁰⁶ Melanie Birks and Jane Mills, *Qualitative Methodology: A Practical Guide* (Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2014), 111-112.

²⁰⁷ Birks and Mills, *Qualitative Methodology*, 111.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

[the] storyline and its potential as theory.”²⁰⁹ Since this coding process did not describe the interconnectivity of themes, in other words did not explain the logic through which evidence was connected, the research sought Idea Networking as its fourth stage of thematic analysis.

Idea Networking (IN) is a method developed by Christopher Alexander as a mapping tool for identifying, grouping and connecting different clusters of statements, ideas or concerns. According to Mike Metcalfe, IN is helpful in making sense of an amalgam of isolated evidence, when the purpose is “to identify the underlying concepts being used to generate the statements, to find some patterns in them, [and] to identify what concepts they have in common.”²¹⁰ The suitability of this coding method to the research is hinged on its theoretical proposition of the ‘Small Worlds Phenomenon,’ which postulates that “social networks adopt a particular pattern,” with each of these networks organised around small clusters.²¹¹ Alexander further notes that communication among these clusters, as shown in Fig. 10, is established either through direct frequent interaction or through indirect transmission, creating together a holistic model of the different meanings reciprocated among a specific socio-cultural group. These thematic interactions are considered “channels that expand continuously, radiating from a common idea or ‘node.’”²¹² So, each statement’s emergent theme presents a node that ties itself to past interpretations while simultaneously anticipating the future through newly espoused meanings. Accordingly, IN presents itself as a flexible coding strategy that allows independent studies of small phenomena to be later tied and incorporated into larger complex networks.

These coding methods were used together to enhance the research’s interpretive process and to reveal whether there was any displacement in the Sūq’s meaning in response to a change in the historical situation, linguistic conventions and/or types of lived experiences, which together constitute the

²⁰⁹ Birks and Mills, *Qualitative Methodology*, 111.

²¹⁰ Mike Metcalfe, *How Concepts Solves Management Problems* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd., 2014), 64.

²¹¹ Metcalfe, *How Concepts Solves Management Problems*, 64-65.

²¹² *Ibid.*, 66.

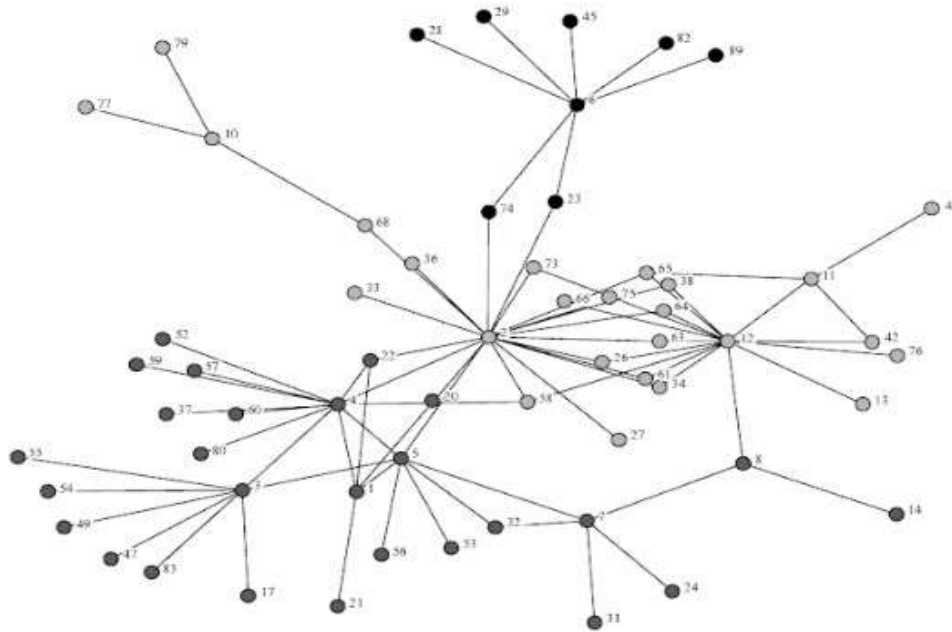


Figure 10 - Christopher Alexander's 'Ideas Networking' Diagram, extracted from Mike Metcalfe's cited book p.67.

research's variables. Accordingly, it was assumed that while each of the historical situations present one distinct orbit of the larger hermeneutic circle, the variables too present themselves as sub-orbits that affect the meaning of the Sūq at every historical stage. Each stage then started by discussing the historical context of the era in question, including the development of the Sūq's typology in relation to the Arab town's urban plan; then investigated some contemporaneous poetic descriptions of the Sūq in relation to its urban, social and cultural values; and finally examined the effects of the Sūq's experience of an Arab's understanding and participation in Sūqs. As described above, recurrent themes identified through these three sub-circles were coded, categorized and analysed following a four-tiered analysis process:²¹³

- 1) Initial Coding, where collected evidence in each historical stage were stipulated in the form of tables relating to the three variables of the research—History, Language and Lived Experience. This stage provided the research with its first set of descriptive codes.

²¹³ Gibbs, *Analysing Qualitative Data*, 44.

- 2) Focused Coding, where descriptive codes were cross-examined and juxtaposed in a Focus Coding Diagram (FCD) for purposes of creating possible links between them and of identifying some larger themes or categories. These categories were colour-coded on the initial coding tables, highlighting the mostly reciprocated themes of the era.
- 3) Theoretical Coding, where every colour group was re-organized into a third table for purposes of creating sets of analytical codes that can be used to explain the main narrative(s) underpinning the Sūq's emergent meaning at every historical part.
- 4) Idea Networking (IN), where all themes—Descriptive, Categorical and Analytical—were mapped as clusters of interrelated meanings. The connections between these different clusters allowed the research to propose various narratives and to explain the trajectory of the Sūq's socially-constructed meaning at variable historical situations.

These processes are described by Gibbs as a form of “thinking about the text and its interpretation.”²¹⁴ Still, it is important here to explain the difference between the IN and the Focused Coding Diagram (FCD), which could be outlined as follows:

- 1) The FCD connects the descriptions or themes presented through the Language Circle to the corresponding themes identified through the Historical Context and Lived Experience, hence responding to Gadamer's argument on “the connection between the life-world basis of language in ritual and the conceptuality of thinking and philosophic language.”²¹⁵ By doing so, the FCD ‘reduces’ the identified sub-themes into sets of Categorized codes, yet showing little in terms of the reciprocal relationship between them.²¹⁶

²¹⁴ Gibbs, *Analysing Qualitative Data*, 40-44.

²¹⁵ Lawrence Kennedy Schmidt, “Language in a Hermeneutic Ontology,” in *Language and Linguisticality in Gadamer's Hermeneutics*, edited by Hans Georg Gadamer, translated by Lawrence K. Schmidt (Maryland: Lexington Books, 2000), 3.

²¹⁶ Metcalfe, *How Concepts Solve Management Problems*, 63.

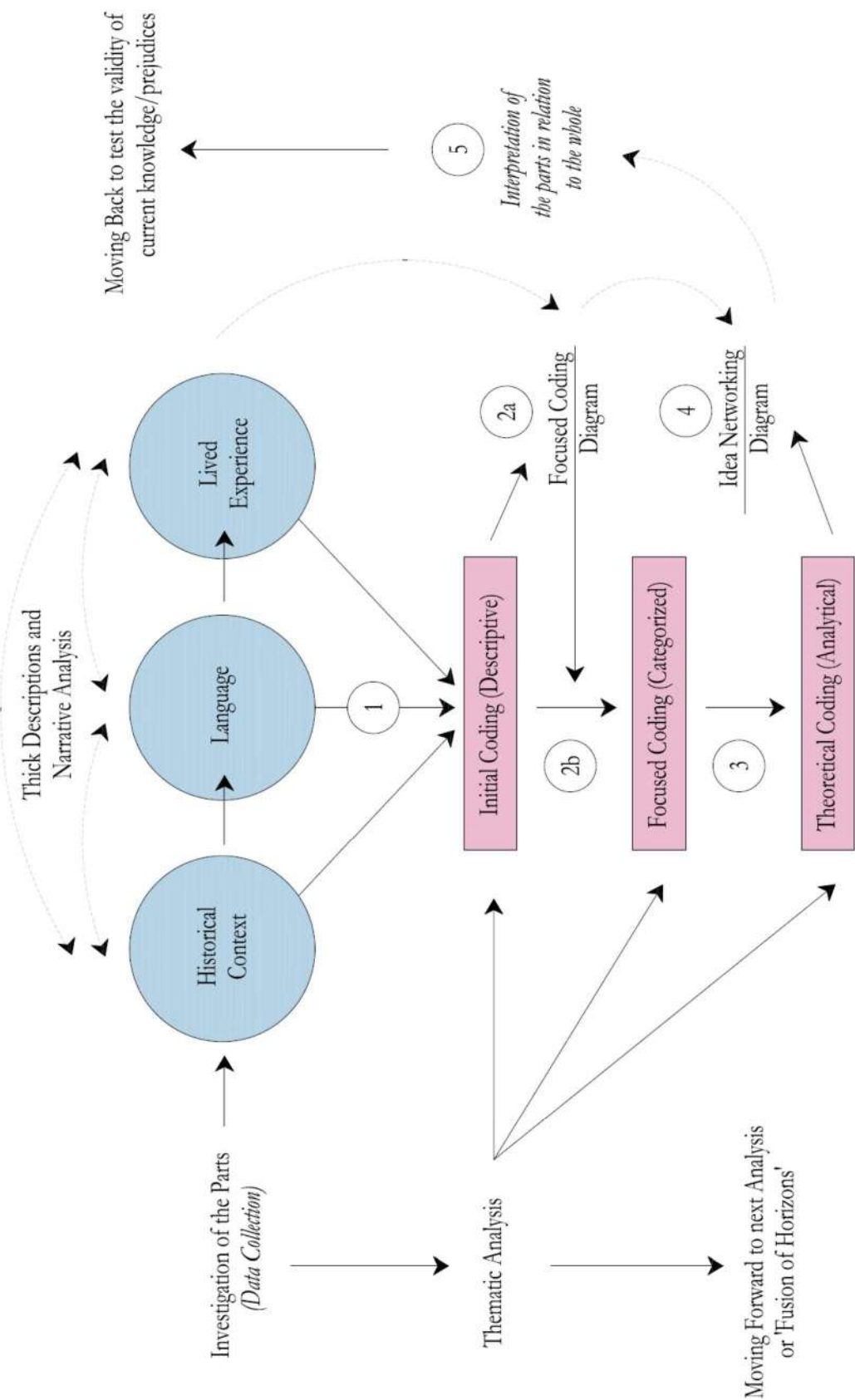


Figure 11 - Research Thematic Analysis Process for every historical part. By author.

- 2) The IN diagram maps the relationships between the Descriptive, Categorized and Analytical codes to identify the possible clusters of meaning underpinning the Sūq's understanding at each historical situation, and to uncover some alternative readings that have been marginalized due to current presuppositions and/or prejudices. So, the IN diagram examines the characteristics of the historical situation in discussion and the descriptions provided by the Sūqs' first-hand users, mapping them as connected nodal points and not as isolated categories. This allows codes to be combined/disseminated/re-interpreted in relation to their position on the IN path, offering more than one possible interpretation.²¹⁷

While the FCD's graphic layout in this research was improvised following the general discussions on the nature and processes of the Hermeneutic Circle (sections 3.2.2 and 3.3.1), the IN diagram's graphic layout followed the recommendations of Metcalf.²¹⁸ According to Metcalfe, an Idea Network can be constructed using 6-200 statements, where each is given a reference number that is inserted in a table, outlining similar statements (links) by reference number and why they are linked.²¹⁹ So, recurrent themes were identified, linked and regrouped in the first three coding stages described above. Afterwards each theme/sub-theme was given a specific reference number. These were then mapped using digital drawing software (AutoCAD) as a set of graphic nodes on intersecting paths. The mapping process started by drawing each larger nodes (Analytical codes) and connecting it to all of the smaller nodes that fell under its category in the Theoretical Coding table. Having done so, further links were created between all nodes based on the findings of the FCD, creating clusters of meanings that connect larger themes through a series of smaller sub-themes. By employing this modelling process, the research was able to propose various relationships that delineate the meaning of each theme/sub-theme in relation to other themes,

²¹⁷ Metcalfe, *How Concepts Solves Management Problems*, 63.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

²¹⁹ Ibid., 67-72.

respecting their contextual and linguistic variations. These paths presented themselves as a rich ground for theoretical interpretations, which were formulated at the end of each historical analysis and reviewed again in light of subsequent findings. The value of this model is hinged on its theoretical basis as an architectural paradigm that attempts to forward an alternative qualitative approach for conducting and practicing design research.²²⁰ Also, it is an auditable process, whose steps can be traced, reviewed and supported by evidence. Finally, it is a graphic process that allows the condensation of evidence into visual presentations.

3.6 Trustworthiness and Ethical Considerations

The following summarizes the research's different approaches for maintaining the trustworthiness of the research's findings and employed methods. These approaches could be summarized in relation to three main concepts: credibility, rigor and dependability. According to Paterson and Higgs, "credibility refers to the truth, value, or believability of the findings."²²¹ To achieve this, the research adopted a series of working strategies, including prolonged engagement with the phenomenon, persistent observations, ample note-taking (text and audio), member checks (interviewees) and the constant writing-rewriting of chapters in light of new findings. The credibility of findings in this research was maintained by a range of analysis methods, used to triangulate collected evidence. According to Paterson and Higgs, the 'Hermeneutic Circle' and 'Fusion of Horizons,' which constitute the core of the research's theoretical/methodological paradigm, make this whole interpretive process visible.²²² This visibility is grounded on the employed methods' ability to express the 'authentic' experience and understanding of the subject.²²³ In this research, this authenticity was achieved using original Arabic text (poetry and literature) as well as the semi-structured interviews, which were employed 'to pick up the threads' uncovered in the urban

²²⁰ Christopher Alexander, *Notes on the Synthesis of Form* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1964).

²²¹ Paterson and Higgs, "Using Hermeneutics as a Qualitative Research Approach in Professional Practice," 352.

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Ibid.

case studies and reviewed literature.²²⁴ By doing so, the research attempted to instate the findings' plausibility, highlighting how "the findings of the study (description, explanation, or theory) 'fit' the evidence from which they were derived."²²⁵ In-depth literature review of the different subject areas that the research adheres to maintained such plausibility, allowing the research not only to position itself within its direct scope of study but also to anchor its findings in relation to a wider theoretical platform on socio-urban practices. The application of the Hermeneutic circle also strengthened the research's rigor and its findings' dependability. This was achieved through the "repeated cycling between the parts and the whole," which allowed the research to explore the different historical horizons and linguistic exchanges that affected the Arabian Sūq's perception and experience.²²⁶ It was also achieved through thick/contextual descriptions, the use of photographs and digital storage techniques, in addition to the multi-tiered coding tactics. By employing such tactics, the research sought to validate its claim to dependability, demonstrating that findings are consistent with collected evidence.²²⁷ Peer checks and the consultation of a professional Arabic/English translator to verify the accuracy of translation further enhanced the research's trustworthiness, credibility and dependability.

Also, the researcher adhered to the ethical guidelines prescribed by the UK Code of Practice for Researchers (UKRIO), GDPR 2018, Social Research Association (SRA) and DMU's Code of Practice for Research Degree Students. Since the study involved interviewing subjects from different ethnic origins and age groups, the researcher sought ethical approval at variable intervals of the project. In addition, throughout all evidence collection instances, the researcher pursued objectivity and considered all possible conflicting interests, aiming "to extend the scope of social enquiry and communicate their findings, for the benefit of the widest possible community."²²⁸ The researcher respected her obligation

²²⁴ Paterson and Higgs, "Using Hermeneutics as a Qualitative Research Approach in Professional Practice," 352.

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ Ibid. 353.

²²⁷ Merriam, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, 221.

²²⁸ Social Research Association, *Ethical Guidelines* (December 2013), 16.

towards the larger community, by making accessible and fully describing the process and circumstances under which the research was conducted. This was also achieved by collecting informed consents from participants and by protecting their interests/anonymity. Finally, in writing the study, the researcher spared no efforts in adhering to the highest codes of conduct and academic integrity, acknowledging sources and contributors.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the proposed research's design and methodological application, including the methods for collecting, analysing and coding evidence. It ended with the measures undertaken to maintain the research's trustworthiness. The application of the research's proposed model starts in the following chapter, which explores through literature review the different studies—Orientalist, Islamic and revisionist—that constitute the 'fore-structures' for understanding Arabian Sūqs. By establishing the subject's Pre-Knowledge, the following chapter intends to locate some presuppositions that we currently have about Sūqs, to identify gaps in knowledge and to set aside some of the shortcomings in current methodologies. By doing so, it will create the first outward movement of the research's Hermeneutic circle.

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4

Chapter Four

Literature Review Pre-Knowledge of the Arabian Sūq

4.1 Introduction

This chapter traces the development of the idea of a marketplace inside and outside of the Arab region for the purpose of establishing the subject's Pre-knowledge and its effects on our current understanding of the Sūq phenomenon. First, the chapter investigates the Greek *agora*, the Roman *forum* and some medieval market towns in Europe (sections 4.2.1 - 4.2.3), focusing on the different social meanings and ritualistic practices that encircled the marketplace event during these historical instances. This is followed by a thicker review of some medieval Arab Sūqs, as described through various Orientalists and revisionist studies (sections 4.4-4.6). So, the chapter aspires to portray that while some urban phenomena, such as the marketplace, behold some universal characteristics relating to their functional, economic and political value, their experience embody particular meanings that need to be understood

within their apposite socio-cultural context. The chapter reviews, analyses and questions some aspects about the origin and nature of knowledge that we currently have about Sūqs, in order to uncover some possible ‘prejudices,’ as understood by Gadamer, that are accrued from the reviewed studies.

4.2 The Marketplace: A Historical Overview

This section explores the development of the marketplace phenomenon in Ancient Greece, Rome and some medieval market towns in Europe. Through this brief review, the intent is to shed light on some ideas related to the general planning, experience, ritualistic activities and poetic memories of a marketplace. Yet, the review deals not with the overall developments of markets in Europe but focuses on some particular historical episodes in the story of a Western marketplace, for purposes of locating possible similarities to their contemporaneous Arabian counterparts.

4.2.1 The Greek Agora

Perhaps the most studied types of architecture are those belonging to the ancient Greek and Roman periods. There is a plethora of studies that examine the development of these two historical eras, including the ancient work of Vitruvius, the Renaissance publications of Alberti and Palladio, as well as the more recent studies of D. S. Robertson, Edmund Bacon, Christopher P. Dickenson, Robin Francis Rhodes and Frank Sear.²²⁹ Here, the focus will be on the rituals of Athenian agoras from 500 BC to 2nd century AD, to later compare it with Pre-Islamic Sūqs in chapter 5. According to Robertson, the Athenian agora was not only a place for trading but also for socializing, comprising of an open rectilinear space surrounded by stoas, theatre and temple(s).²³⁰ It is assumed that the

²²⁹ D. S. Robertson, *Greek and Roman Architecture*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1943); Edmund Bacon, *The Design of Cities*, rev. ed. (New York: Penguin Books, 1976); Christopher P. Dickenson, *On the Agora: The Evolution of a Public Space in Hellenistic and Roman Greece* (The Netherlands; BRILL, 2016); Robin Francis Rhodes, *Architecture and Meaning on the Athenian Acropolis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Frank Sear, *Roman Architecture* (Oxon: Routledge, 1998).

²³⁰ Robertson, *Greek and Roman Architecture*, 379.

Athenian agora played a role in defining the boundaries of the ancient *polis* and its religious practices. This is understood from the rituals undertaken along the Panathenaic Way for example, where the ritualistic procession towards the Acropolis seems to have been weaved into the architectural fabric and the urban space itself. According to Rhodes, the Acropolis was the culmination of a long processional ritual that was guided by the urban and architectural space from, “the Dipylon Gate at the edge of town through the Potters’ Quarter, through the agora and onto the Acropolis.”²³¹ The temples of the Acropolis accentuate this relationship and give further meaning to the agora and its stoas, seemingly redefining the boundaries of Earth, not in its physical dimension alone, but also in ‘its essential being as a sheltering agent.’²³²

The Royal Stoa, for instance, was developed “on the northwest corner beside the Panathenaic Way for the city’s chief religious’ magistrate, who was responsible for official sacrifices, administration of the city’s festivals, and adjudication of priestly disputes.”²³³ The painted Stoa, which depicted paintings of Athenian military triumphs and heroes, was the meeting point of Stoic philosophers and the place for jury trials. The sheltered walkways of the Stoas created a sense of communal identity, where every private group was always reminded of his belonging to a larger community of meaning that exists in the open public spaces. Moreover, the agora is a central theme in Panathenaic rituals, where the festival’s main movement was anchored along the shaft of the marketplace (Fig. 12).²³⁴ According to Bacon, until 420BC the Athenian agora was little beyond ambiguously positioned structures along the Panathenaic Way. The improvisation of civic institutions, temples, shrines and theatres allowed the space to evolve to full maturity by the Hellenistic period.

²³¹ Rhodes, *Architecture and Meaning on the Athenian Acropolis*, 44.

²³² Martin Heidegger, “The Origin of the Work of Art,” in *Basic Writings*, rev. ed., edited by David Farrell Krell (New York: Harper Collins, 1993), 168.

²³³ Michael Fazio, Marian Moffett and Lawrence Wodehouse, *A World History of Architecture*, 2nd ed. (Laurence King Publishing: London, 2009), 58.

²³⁴ Bacon, *The Design of Cities*, 70-71.

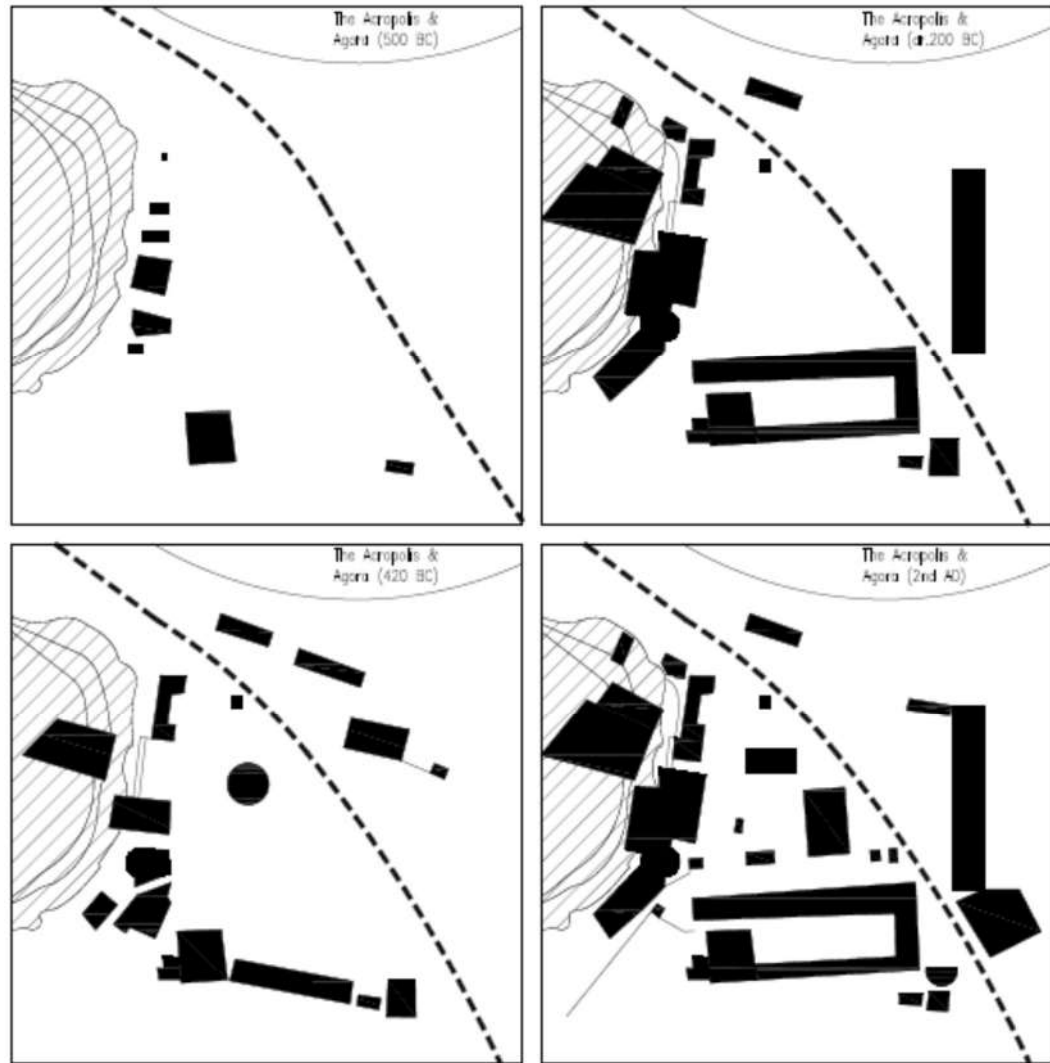


Figure 12 - Development of the Acropolis and Agora along the shaft of the Panathenaic Route: 500 BC (Top left), 420BC (Bottom left), 200BC (Top right) and 2nd AD (Bottom right). Illustration by author after Edmund Bacon's cited book.

These developments reframed the context of Athenian civic life, infusing it with “spirit and texture.”²³⁵ Still, many current scholars, such as Christopher Dickenson, are trying to redefine the meaning of the agora beyond its classification as an open public space with trading stoas.²³⁶ In this regard, Dickenson argues that this interpretation requires careful scrutiny because it masks the historical development of an agora, confining it to that of the later Roman market type. He claims that,

the word [agora] carried a wide range of meanings for the ancient Greeks. It was perhaps most often used to describe the physical spaces within cities that archaeologists hope to identify... it could

²³⁵ Bacon, *The Design of Cities*, 71.

²³⁶ Dickenson, *On the Agora*, 10.

*refer to multipurpose public squares, to specialized market buildings or to spaces more geared towards politics and administration.*²³⁷

Accordingly, Dickenson suggests that the agora possibly intended an assembly of people, hence pointing to the more abstract meaning of the term market as we employ it today.²³⁸ He also discusses some ‘assumed’ differences between a Greek *agora* and a Roman *forum*, quoting Vitruvius who described the agora as a square shaped structure and the forum as a rectilinear space that is “more suited for gladiatorial combats.”²³⁹ Aside from this formalistic difference, Henri Lefebvre’s analysis of these two types suggests that the ‘empty’ space of the agora accentuates the Greek *polis*’s religious landscape; while the Roman forum’s amalgam of ‘objects and things’ represents a shift in the space’s ideological basis, or its ‘centrality.’²⁴⁰ Yet, such centrality deals not with the typographic qualities of ancient cities alone but also with some shifts in their social, religious and political hierarchies. The following section explores some aspects of this shift through the particular case of Trajan’s Roman *forum*.

4.2.2 The Roman Forum

Similar to the agora, the forum presents itself as a central theme in Roman city planning. This section will focus on Trajan’s forum and market, which are believed to be among the last additions to Rome’s Imperial complexes (around 106 AD).²⁴¹ Through this example, the following intends to draw a general idea of Roman marketplaces, for purposes of later identifying their possible influences on the Sūqs of Arabia during the Pre-Islamic (chapter 5) and early Islamic (chapter 6) eras. As illustrated in Figure 13, the overall planning of Trajan’s *forum* relays important insights regarding the building ideals of the late Roman era.²⁴² The forum itself comprises of a large “loggia-lined forecourt measuring 660 by 390

²³⁷ Dickenson, *On the Agora*, 10.

²³⁸ Ibid., 11.

²³⁹ Ibid., 11-14.

²⁴⁰ Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 238-240, 331.

²⁴¹ Leland M. Roth, *Understanding Architecture: Its Elements, History and Meaning*, 3rd ed. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 257-258.

²⁴² Sear, *Roman Architecture*, 159.

feet, further enlarged by the semi-circular exedrae on each side screened by loggias.”²⁴³ The northern exedra overlooks the market buildings, where the roofs of its colonnaded porticos once bore “gilded statues of horses and representations of military standards,” are described by Aulus Gellius.²⁴⁴ As for the market building itself, architectural ruins show that it is an independent multi-story structure, comprising of over 150 rooms that range from shops to imperial offices.²⁴⁵ The north side of the forum houses the Basilica Ulpia, while the far-north end of the forum is crowned by a temple dedicated to the reified Trajan—built by his successor Hadrian.²⁴⁶ Unlike the agora, which seems to be dependent on the city’s natural environment to create free movement between different buildings and everyday practices, the forum appears to reconstruct and divide the city into courtyards, roofed loggias and buildings to control the movement between the city’s different political, commercial and religious quarters. The activities within these open courtyards is assumed to encompass all these aspects of life, probably housing some seasonal trading stalls too. This is implied through the works of Claire Holleran, who believes that in addition to permanent grand markets or *macella* other market types, like seasonal and festival markets, were present in ancient Rome.²⁴⁷ Yet, these types were often marginalized due to their ‘unorderly’ social and political significance, resulting in the idea of street and/or mobile vendors to be often associated with vulgarity in Western literature, as claimed by Holleran.²⁴⁸ Here, she argues that ancient Rome’s street vendors were not only a noisy phenomenon but also posed many challenges to the city’s urban order, since “the mobility of the hawkers and the temporary nature of many street stalls made such traders difficult to control and regulate,” and that they “became a major problem if their stalls became permanent or semi-permanent and this

²⁴³ Roth, *Understanding Architecture*, 257.

²⁴⁴ Aulus Cornelius Gellius, *Attic Nights Book 13*, edited by Bill Thayer, in Loeb Classical Library edition (1927), http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Gellius/13*.html (accessed Nov. 30, 2018).

²⁴⁵ Fazio, Moffett and Wodehouse, *A World History of Architecture*, 115.

²⁴⁶ Roth, *Understanding Architecture*, 257.

²⁴⁷ Claire Holleran, *Shopping in Ancient Rome: The Retail Trade in the Late Republic and the Principate* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 192-193.

²⁴⁸ Holleran, *Shopping in Ancient Rome*, 203.

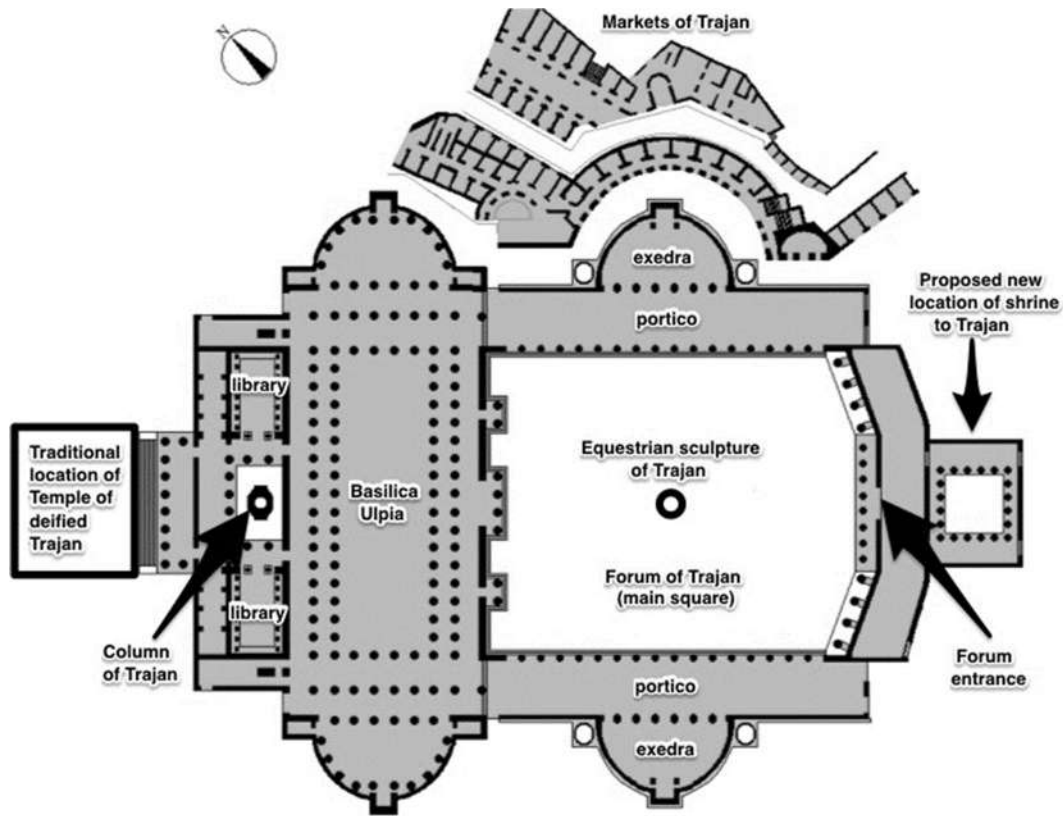


Figure 13 - Plan of the Forum of Trajan.

started to cause an obstruction and impede movement through the streets.”²⁴⁹ Accordingly, it is understood that the ancient Roman city was a highly organized urban entity that “was based not on an overall design structure, but on the gradual accumulation of self-contained building complexes. Each of these was designed to serve a discrete function, and it was interrelated to its neighbours.”²⁵⁰ To better understand the social relevance of such planning strategy, the following will examine the concepts of procession and spectatorship in Ancient Roman festivals.

In Book 4 of *De Architectura* (originally written 30-15 BC), Vitruvius makes several notes on the importance of spectatorship in Roman festivals, as opposed to participation in their Greek counterpart (section 4.2.1).²⁵¹ For him, hierarchy in Ancient Rome seems to dictate different levels of participation and spectatorship, where being seen implies stature and influence. According to Diana

²⁴⁹ Holleran, *Shopping in Ancient Rome*, 215.

²⁵⁰ Bacon, *The Design of Cities*, 85.

²⁵¹ Vitruvius, *The Ten Books on Architecture*, translated by Morris Hicky Morgan (New York: Dover Publications, 1960).

Favro, the common Roman population enjoyed the festival from street view level, where the parades and rituals proceeded towards the Temples and Arches of Triumph. The more influential sector of the population participated in the procession in wheeled carts, watching the parades from elevated terraces or seats. While many parts of the procession necessitated being engulfed into the congested narrow streets of the city, other rituals were observed from specifically designed amphitheatre-like buildings erected exclusively for festive events. One such experience, during the festival of the 1st January in Roman calendar, is described by Ovid in his *Fasti* (written around 8AD),

*The happy day is dawning... The procession to the Capitol' peak is
clad in spotless white so the people match the holiday spirit.
Consuls-elect, newly and duly attired and escorted, sit on their new
chairs of office.*²⁵²

Ovid's poem suggests that the Roman procession culminates at the Capitoline Temple. Accordingly, the processional route of the festival passes not through the market space, as was the case in Athens, but carves its way around the city's precinct, for purposes of heralding military triumphs as much as of honouring the gods. Such movement necessitated the incorporation of a sense of architectural excitement, rhythm and discipline, where features like post-and-lintel colonnades, arches and cylinders intensified the dramatic setting of the procession and reinforced the city's socio-urban hierarchy. Some of these ideas seem to have influenced the urban planning and socio-urban relations of later European towns. The following will look into some facets of such influence on the development of medieval market towns in Europe.

4.2.3 The Medieval Market Town

Like their ancient counterparts, studies on medieval European markets are ample, examining not only the urban development of the space but also the laws and ethics of medieval trade. Among the most prominent authors on the subject are James Davis, Anna Hallett, Maryanne Kowaleski and R. H. Hilton, with this

²⁵² Betty Rose Nagle, *Ovid's Fasti: Roman Holidays* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995), 44.

latter defining the medieval town as “the location of permanent market activity.”²⁵³ This section gives an overview of some particular case studies that exemplify the development of European market towns from the 10th to 13th century, for purposes of identifying similarities between them and their Islamic counterparts (chapter 6). Davis describes the development of medieval markets, noting that it was “accompanied by a multitude of laws,” a particular ‘market morality’ that was designed by kings or lords as well as by “the needs and morals of market-goers.”²⁵⁴ This gave rise to the development of professional guilds, which played an important role in protecting the welfare of merchants, artisans and farmers.²⁵⁵ Kowaleski further notes that the medieval market town was bound to some ‘legal’ and ethical protocols that dictated the trading rituals, where the duration and setting of markets—weekly trading events lasting one or two day—and fairs—annual events lasting for three days—was controlled to sustain the town’s economic growth.²⁵⁶

In a way, it seems that the ideas of order and occupational division were influenced by Roman precedents. Still, the location and urban plan of Europe’s medieval markets, both regular and seasonal, did not follow a structured design as was the case with the *fora* of Imperial Rome. For instance, the location of a market in each town differed from the other, with some established near gates, while others positioned near castles, squares, monasteries or churches.²⁵⁷ Consequently, the design of markets also differed, with some comprising of stalls filling an open space or square, like the weekly or seasonal markets present in most European countries; and others lining small streets or arcaded buildings, like the permanent shops in some French, German, Polish and Austrian market towns.

²⁵³ James Davis, *Medieval Market Morality-Life: Law and Ethics in the English Marketplace, 1200-1500* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Anna Hallett, *Markets and Marketplaces of Britain: A History* (London: Shire Publications, 2009); Maryanne Kowaleski, *Local Markets and Regional Trade in Medieval Exeter* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Rodney Howard Hilton, *English and French Towns in Feudal Society: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

²⁵⁴ Davis, *Medieval Market Morality-Life*, 137.

²⁵⁵ Sheilagh Ogilvie, *Institutions and European Trade: Merchant Guilds, 1000–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 19.

²⁵⁶ Kowaleski, *Local Markets and Regional Trade in Medieval Exeter*, 41.

²⁵⁷ Hilton, *English and French Towns in Feudal Society*, 153.

Dijkman and Kowaleski explain that such variations were due to differences in a town's geographic location, size, type of urban merchants, legislative bodies, demographic and occupational structures.²⁵⁸ The following examples will help to elucidate some of these variations.

In Milan, for example, the earliest known market was established during the 10th century, when Otto I granted plots of land to the Church of Saint Ambrose.²⁵⁹ According to Lopez and Raymond, trading then took place,

*from the windows of residential houses, in the homes of merchants, in front of craftsmen's workshops, on the docks of seas and rivers, and many other places. The busiest centre, however, was the public market. This was usually a square occupied by carts, removable stalls, benches, or by semi-permanent stands, and surrounded by buildings with the shops and the vaulted storage rooms of the more important merchants. As the time went by, permanent structures tended to displace removable stalls, the single market branched out into many specialized markets and into district markets, and the shopping centre spread over one street after another.*²⁶⁰

This model seems to be also present in the Scandinavian medieval towns of Stugna, Oslo and Bergen during the mid-12th century.²⁶¹ According to Kristensen, all three towns followed a similar planning strategy, were chartered by the king, housed many churches/convents and had street markets with stalls.²⁶² While Kristensen's study suggests the integral role played by the king and the church in establishing these medieval Scandinavian towns, this influence seems to vary in the cases of England and France, whose market towns—both small and large—developed mostly under feudal lordship from 11th century onwards. According to Hilton, the market towns of medieval England and France showed comparable modes of development in terms of population size, legislative process and

²⁵⁸ Jessica Dijkman, *Shaping Medieval Markets: The Organisation of Commodity Markets in Holland 1200-1450* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 109; Kowaleski, *Local Markets and Regional Trade in Medieval Exeter*, 41.

²⁵⁹ Robert S. Lopez and Irving W. Raymond, *Medieval Trade in the Mediterranean World: Illustrative Documents* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 54.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁶¹ Stine Arctander Kristensen, "A Medieval Town: A spatial study of the Trading Centre and Episcopal Seat of Bergen, c. 1050-1250," (Master's Thesis, University of Oslo, 2014),

²⁶² Kristensen, "A Medieval Town," 74 - 76.

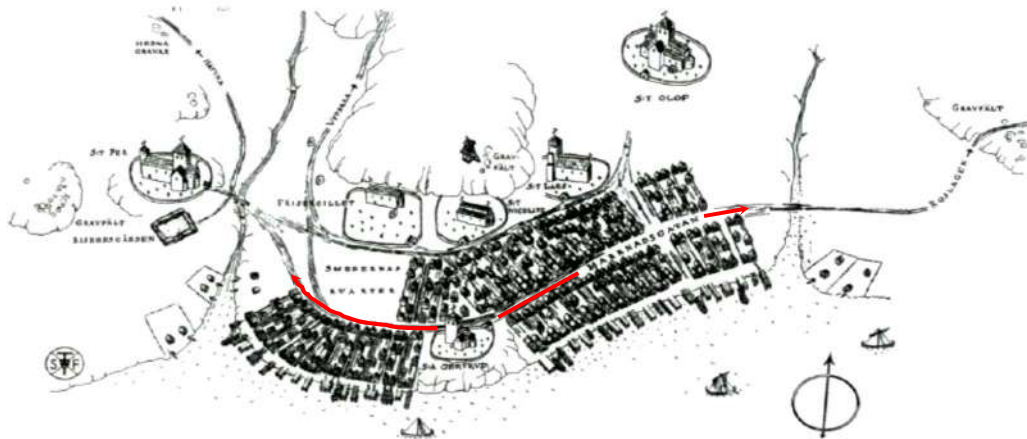


Figure 14 - Reconstructed picture of Stugna in the mid-12th century. A market street (highlighted in red) with town houses. Extracted from Kristensen's cited work page 48.

occupational diversity.²⁶³ Hilton further notes that the market square beheld a prominent position in these towns, sustaining everyday trade, seasonal markets and fairs. He also argues that carnivals and processions, both religious and secular, played an important role in the development of medieval market life.²⁶⁴ This idea is expounded by Christian Frost in his study of the urban development of medieval Salisbury. According to him, Salisbury's new market square—conceived around 1219AD—was directly related to the processional route towards the cathedral.²⁶⁵ He further argues that there exists a distinct relationship between the urban positioning of the market square and the cathedral at Salisbury, falling at the intersection between the town's North/South gates and its East/West gates forming what is referred to as the Poultry Cross.²⁶⁶ While Frost believes that this urban strategy of “dividing the city into four [with the *forum* in the centre]” echoes some earlier Roman planning tactics, he contends that “it is more likely to have been a civic rather than a symbolic gesture,” given its late coming.²⁶⁷ Aside from the central market, Frost identifies specialized venues around the market

²⁶³ Hilton, *English and French Towns in Feudal Society*, 53-55.

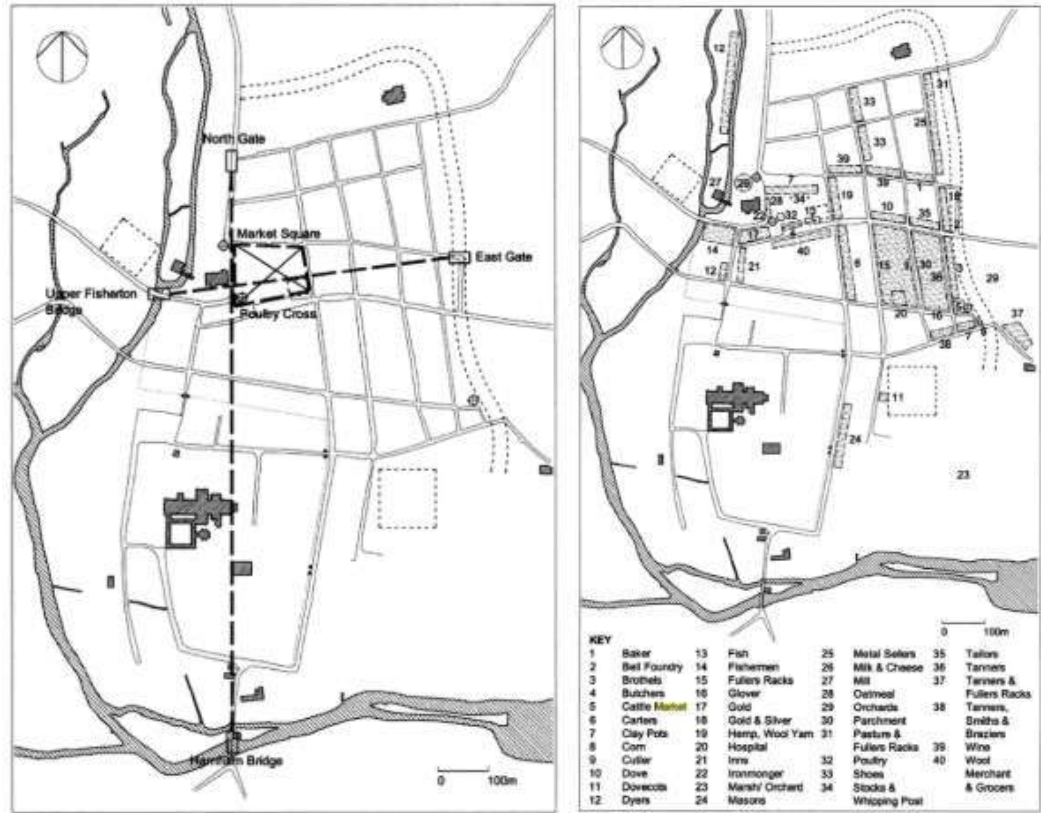
²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 154.

²⁶⁵ Frost, *Time, Space, and Order*, 168.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 217.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 217-218.

Figure 15 - Left, Poultry Cross plan as shown in Frost's cited book, page 217. Right, plan of Salisbury with occupational divisions as shown in Frost's cited book, page 66.



square, yet with little ordering logic in terms of hierarchy or these venues' relationship to the cathedral.²⁶⁸

Even though we cannot generalize this planning strategy across all European medieval towns, Frost's study implies that the medieval market square in terms of its urban plan, duration and occupational divisions was sought as a tool for benefitting common welfare and for reinforcing the economic growth of towns. Despite the absence of an underlying logic for the urban positioning of market squares and individual stalls in the particular case of Salisbury for instance, Salisbury's market cross (Fig. 14) suggests the presence of some religious symbolism that ties the whole space together. While the market cross is a common feature in almost all medieval market towns, signalling the legal status of its market, the perpendicular streets defining the position of these features seem to behold some religious symbols. Anna Hallett argues that such symbolism is

²⁶⁸ Frost, *Time, Space, and Order*, 67.

found at other English, French and German medieval market towns,²⁶⁹ which integrated the ancient Roman *castrum* plan with ‘cross-like’ junctions.²⁷⁰ In this way, the medieval marketplace presents itself as a representational space that not only reflects the limitations of its time but also the different historical, social and cultural factors that contribute to its everyday experience. Here, religion, politics, economy, social hierarchy and technology coalesce to form a particular marketplace experience, making room for various architectural innovations and socio-urban practices, like processions, rituals and trading. Lopez and Raymond argue that this socio-urban formula is not only present in the medieval market towns of Europe, extending itself to some Arabian market towns of the Islamic Empire, particularly in those regions near the Mediterranean Sea.²⁷¹ The following sections will discuss the variations of such argument through the lens of different Orientalist sources, many of which seem to have based their understanding of Islamic (in its religious sense) towns on the medieval European ideals of ‘market morality.’

4.3 A Historiography of the Arabian Sūq and Orientalism

In comparison to the copious amount of literature existing on Arabia’s Islamic period, little exists on the effects of Pre-Islamic Arabian typologies in developing the medieval Islamic urban vocabulary. While the history and development of Pre-Islamic towns will be discussed in the next chapter, it is important to outline the possible reasons that led to the marginalization of Pre-Islamic Arabian heritage. First is the lack of official documentation, resulting in its knowledge being largely dependent on fragmented speculations extracted from Quranic verses, Prophet Mohammed’s (PBUH) *hadith*, recited poetry, ancient Greek, Roman or Persian records, archaeological findings and later travellers’ journals. Second is the Islamic opposition to the polytheistic religion of Pre-Islamic Arabia, which led to the coining of the era as a time of *Jahiliyyah* (Arabic

²⁶⁹ Hallett, *Markets and Marketplaces of Britain*, 51.

²⁷⁰ Frost, *Time, Space, and Order*, 217-218.

²⁷¹ Robert S. Lopez and Irving W. Raymond, *Medieval Trade in the Mediterranean World: Illustrative Documents* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 76.

term meaning ignorance and violence) and the marginalization of its cultural heritage.²⁷² Third is the Orientalist pre-occupation with Islamic types, which often led to a misrepresentation of Arabian identity as one solely defined through Islam (section 1.2). Even though many of the early Orientalist studies' intended to establish "a system of knowledge about the Orient, an accepted grid for filtering through the Orient into Western consciousness," they became authoritative sources of knowledge for many later works and were seldom scrutinized for consistency.²⁷³ Yet, contemporary theorists, like Edward Said and Janet Abu-Lughod, question the viability of many such studies and their conclusions, arguing against the 'limited examples and place-specific comments' that they relied on.²⁷⁴ For, Lughod argues that these studies generalized and abstracted the region's rich and highly diverse socio-cultural history, noting that,

*Forgotten is the fact that only a handful of cities are actually described. Forgotten is the fact that only certain legal codes – on which the Islamic form of the city is presumed to be based – have been studied. Forgotten is the fact that Islamic cities have evolved over time and that the socio-political system in Damascus and Aleppo in the 14th century under Mamluk rule cannot possibly provide a convincing description of how Islamic cities sui generis were governed.*²⁷⁵

To trace the development of these Orientalist studies, a possible start would be William Marçais's (1872-1956) article '*L'Islamisme et la Vie Urbaine*,' which is considered one of the earliest and mostly cited works on the subject (section 1.2), as claimed by Lughod.²⁷⁶ In this article, Marçais emphasizes that Islam was essentially an urban religion, whose towns are characterized by the presence of a Friday mosque, a nearby market and a *hamman*.²⁷⁷ These descriptions were expanded by Georges Marçais (1876-1962), whose work, according to Lughod, offered 'a morphology to the Islamic city' and contributed

²⁷² Hoyland, *Arabia and the Arabs*, 2.

²⁷³ Said, *Orientalism*, 14.

²⁷⁴ Janet Abu-Lughod, "The Islamic City – Historic Myth, Islamic Essence, and Contemporary Relevance," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 19 (1987).

²⁷⁵ Abu-Lughod, "The Islamic City – Historic Myth, Islamic Essence, and Contemporary Relevance," 155.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 160.

²⁷⁷ Marçais, "*L'Islamisme et la Vie Urbaine*," 86 and 89.

to a deeper understanding of its residential structures and the Sūqs' hierarchy/social order.²⁷⁸ In describing the old market of Fez, he states,

I have said that the centre was occupied by the Great Mosque, the old political centre, the religious and intellectual centre of the city, where the courses were given to students from the various schools. Near the mosque, the religious centre, we find the furnishers of sacred items, the Sūq of candle sellers, the merchants of incense and other perfumes. Near the mosque, the intellectual centre, we also find the bookstores, the bookbinders and, near the latter, the Sūq of merchants of leather and the slipper-makers which also use leather. This introduces us to the clothing industries and commerce in cloth, which also occupy so large a place in the life of Islamic cities. The essential organ is a great market, a group of markets that carry the mysterious name, Qaiçaria. The Qaiçaria... is a secure place encircled by walls where foreign merchants, above all Christians, come to display their cloth materials brought from all European countries, The Qaiçaria, placed not far from the Great Mosque, as in Fez or Marrakesh, for example, is a vital centre of economic activity in the city... Approaching the gates one finds places for caravans ... In the quarters of the periphery were the dyers, the tanners, and, almost outside the city, the potters.²⁷⁹

Here, Marçais differentiates between two types of markets in Fez, one constituting of shops that flank the streets near the mosque, and another encircled by walls and dedicated to foreign Christian merchants. Even though such differentiation has been noted in section 1.3, the above description suggests that the market halls of Islamic Arabia were built to simulate the foreign merchants' trading outlets not only for their comfort but also for their security and seclusion from daily Islamic events. Gustave von Grunebaum (1909-1972) agrees with such interpretation, noting that these structures were "the only section of the Sūqs which is regularly roofed, and which can be locked."²⁸⁰ Even though Lughod believes that Grunebaum's work provides no critical additions to those of Marçais, he still offers many ideas concerning the socio-political nature of Islamic towns, arguing that the lack of a clear municipal governance system was counterpoised by Islamic jurisprudence and 'guild-like organizations,' or what he

²⁷⁸ Abu-Lughod, "The Islamic City – Historic Myth, Islamic Essence, and Contemporary Relevance," 156.

²⁷⁹ Ibid., 156-157.

²⁸⁰ Grunebaum, "The Structure of the Muslim Town," 142-143.

refers to as *khitat*.²⁸¹ Since the idea of guilds for Grunebaum seems to be based on his understanding of some medieval European practices, Jamel Akbar argues that Grunebaum's translation of '*khitat*' as 'marking out' marginalizes the Muslim city's socio-urban dynamics and confines it to issues of occupational divisions.²⁸² Akbar further claims that the reprimands of such (mis)translation and its Euro-centric echoes (sections 4.2.2 and 4.2.3) are also apparent in the works of K.A.C. Creswell and J. Lassner,²⁸³ who believed that "Basra, Kufa, and Fustat must have been chaotic labyrinths of lanes and blind alleys, of tents and huts alternating with waste ground," and that "at Kufa the inhabitants of one quarter required a guide when they entered another."²⁸⁴ In a way, these views seem to propagate that Islamic Arab towns—particularly the earlier prototypes—lacked not only urban planning strategies but possibly also the needed socio-urban references that can assist one to navigate intelligibly through the city.²⁸⁵

Aside from such generalized conclusion, which marginalizes the possibility that an Islamic Arab town possessed variable forms of socio-urban development, these Orientalist studies were also criticized for their inconsistent historical and methodological processes, a problem suggested through their disinterested-ness in an Arab town's Pre-Islamic history and their emphasis on religion and politics as sole contributors to its 'moral' development. This critique was again forwarded by Lughod, who argues that the socio-urban development of Islamic Arab towns needs to be understood in relation to three important praxes: the religious, the political and the social.²⁸⁶ She explains these ideas first in relation to 'juridical distinctions,' which divided the community into social

²⁸¹ Abu-Lughod, "The Islamic City – Historic Myth, Islamic Essence, and Contemporary Relevance," 158.

²⁸² Jamel Akbar, "*Khatta* and the Territorial Structure of Early Muslim Towns," *Muqarnas* 6 (1989): 23.

²⁸³ K.A.C Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, 2nd ed. (New York: Clarendon P. 1969); Jacob Lassner, "Municipal Entities and Mosques: An Additional Note on the Imperial Centre," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 10, no. 1 (1967): 53-63.

²⁸⁴ Akbar, "*Khatta* and the Territorial Structure of Early Muslim Towns," 22.

²⁸⁵ These views will be explored in chapters 5 and 6, which together will readdress the socio-urban meaning of Pre-Islamic and early Islamic Arab towns.

²⁸⁶ Abu-Lughod, "The Islamic City – Historic Myth, Islamic Essence, and Contemporary Relevance," 158-162.

organizations, each of which was responsible of specific vicinal functions, such as street maintenance, district guards, light providers, water distributors... etc. She then discusses it in relation to ‘gender segregation,’ which imposed on the town a system of spatial filters that would demarcate private/public spaces. Finally, she explores the concept of ‘property law,’ which prescribed certain regulations regarding the use/expansion of property and neighbourhood rights. These ideas are further expanded in Bianca’s investigations, which, as shall be reviewed in the next sections, accentuate the importance of these three spheres—social, religious and political—in the making and experiencing of Arab towns. The following will focus on the effects of these spheres on the Sūq’s socio-urban practices, pointing how most of the reviewed studies seem to concentrate on the Sūq’s Islamic period and whether its development corresponds to its European counterpart. Still, the following deals “not with a correspondence between Orientalism and Orient, but with the internal consistency of Orientalism and its ideas about” an Arab city, and how such ideas affect the Sūq’s current perception.²⁸⁷

4.4 The Sūq as a Religious Space

It has been suggested by many sources, such as Ali al-Houli, Alsayyad and Lapidus, that one of the main differences between Pre-Islamic settlements and those of Early Islam lies in the concept of urbanization or ‘*tamseer*.’²⁸⁸ Even though some of these sources seem to dismiss many archaeological clues regarding the nature of Pre-Islamic Arabian towns and their variable modes of socio-urban inhabitation (section 5.3), the aim here is to identify possible prejudices that were accrued from some Orientalist interpretations of the Islamic urbanization project, and to examine their effects on the understanding of the Sūq and its modes of socio-urban participation. The most important of these effects is probably the constant need to link the ideological cum cultural foundation of all Arab towns to an Islamic origin, falsely implying that these towns were little

²⁸⁷ Said, *Orientalism*, 13.

²⁸⁸ Ali Muftah Abdula Salam al-Houli, *Takhteet al-mudon al-‘arabia wal islamia al-jadidah fil ‘asr al-rashidi* (تخطيط المدن العربية والإسلامية الجديدة في العصر الراشدي), Arabic (Amman: Dar Zahran, 2011), 229-230; Alsayyad, *Cities and Caliphs*, 1-4; Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies*, 1.

beyond blank slates upon which the Islamic conquerors bestowed an original meaning. This understanding is probably derived from many Islamic records of the medieval era, such as those of al-Ya'qubi (died 897 AD), al-Baladhuri (806-892) and al-Hamawi (1179–1229), which have been heavily studied by early Orientalists.²⁸⁹ Through many such medieval sources, the meaning of the Sūq is indefinitely tied to the overall planning of the Islamic city, which is prototypically conceived as, “Friday mosque + public bath + market = Islamic City.”²⁹⁰ While this simplistic formula possibly describes the Prophet’s (PBUH) early urban state in Medina (section 5.4.5), or the early settlements in Basra and Kufa,²⁹¹ Zayde Antrim questions the historical foundation of this description and argues that its chief intent was to grant newly conquered towns a sense of “family resemblances.”²⁹² She further reckons that this description was probably endorsed by medieval Muslim historians to “express a range of religious and political agendas,” and to make “proximate what otherwise might seem distant and disconnected, whether temporally or spatially, and therefore expanding in both space and time the bases for belonging in and to a city.”²⁹³

This idea is also explored by Bianca, who explains that with the expansion of the Islamic realm during the Umayyad, Abbasid and Fatimid Caliphates, Islamic urban strategies matured along foreign social and cultural conditions. For, unlike their Pre-Islamic counterparts, newly conquered lands constituted largely of non-Arab communities, whose social structures and cultural rituals differed in varying degrees to those of the Arabian Peninsula (sections 6.3-6.5). Assuming that Islam’s architectural maturity resulted from the development of the mosque type in relation to the Roman basilica and the trading/ceremonial squares of

²⁸⁹ Al-Ya'qubi, *Al-buldan* (البلدان), Arabic, edited by Mohammed Amin Danawy (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al- 'Ilmiyah, 1984); Ahmed Ibn Yahya al-Baladhuri, *Futūḥ al-buldān* (فتوح البلدان), edited by Umar Anis Ṭabba (Cairo: Dar al-Nashr li-al-Jami'iyin, 1957); Yaqt al-Hamawi, *Mu'jam al-buldan* (معجم البلدان), Arabic (Beirut: Dar Sader, 1977).

²⁹⁰ Zayde Antrim, *Routes and Realms: The Power of Place in the Early Islamic World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 34.

²⁹¹ Ali Muftah Abdula Salam al-Houli, *Takhteet al-Mudon al- 'Arabia wal Islamia al- Jadidah fil 'Asr al-Rashidi* (تخطيط المدن العربية والإسلامية الجديدة في العصر الراشدي), Arabic (Amman: Dar Zahran, 2011), 229-230.

²⁹² Antrim, *Routes and Realms*, 34.

²⁹³ Ibid.

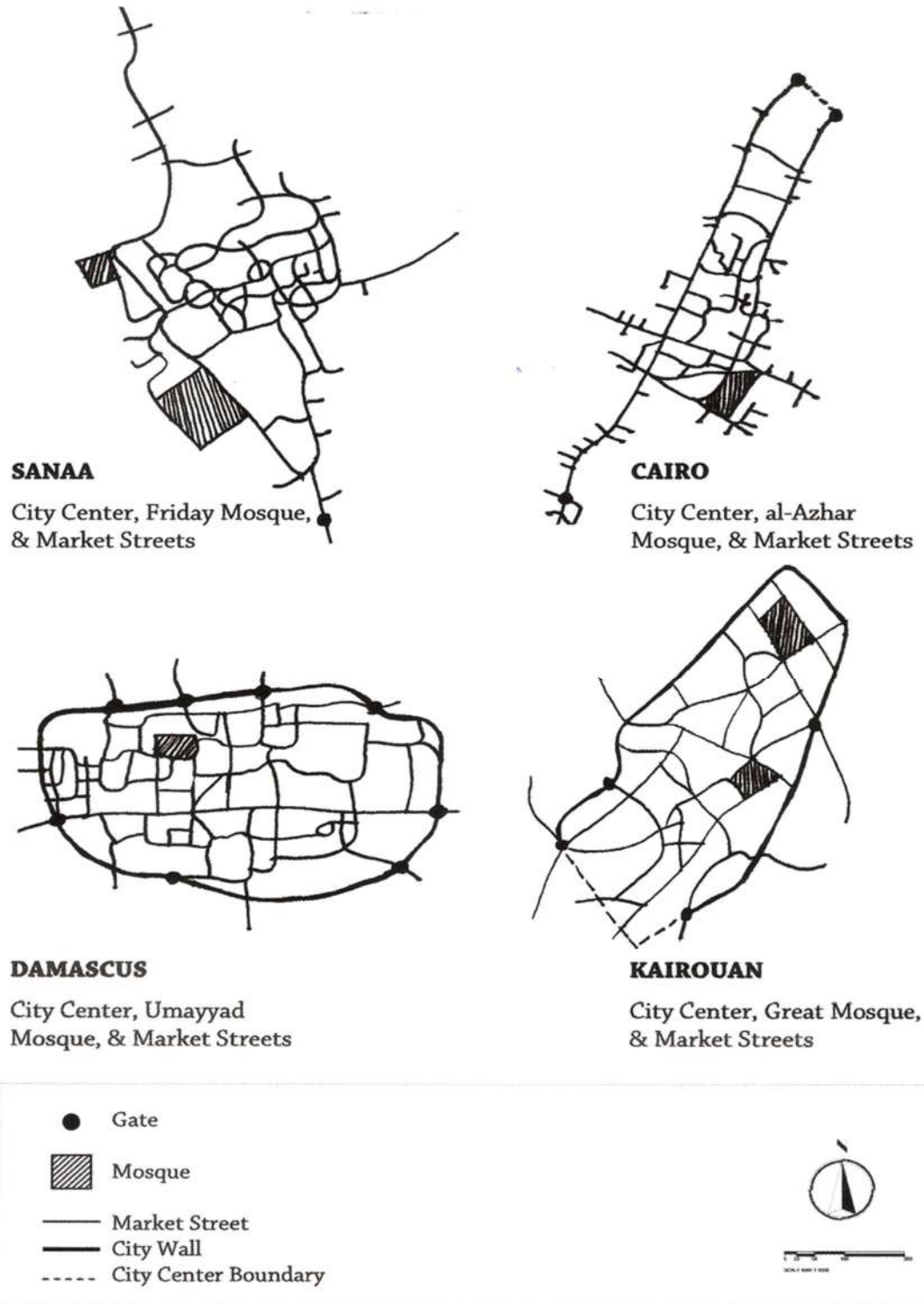


Figure 16 - Graphic illustration of street flow in Sana'a, Cairo, Damascus and Kairouan. The graphic maps show the centrality of the mosque in relation to the flow and the position of the gates on the outskirts of the city walls.

earlier Greco-Roman agora and *fora*, Bianca seldom explains the fusion processes of these allegedly different urban types and he also rarely compares between the Islamic strategies of place-making and those of non-Muslim or Pre-Islamic Arabs. For this reason, he claims that the synthesis between traditional and acquired socio-urban cultures led to a redefinition of dwelling through religion, where the mosque took precedence at the heart of the Islamic town. This view is possibly based on medieval Islamic sources, like Ibn Jubayr's (1145-1217) following description of the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus,

*Here people congregate, for it is their place of care-dispelling and recreation, and here every evening you will see them, coming and going from east to west, and others you will see talking to their friends, and some reading. In this manner they will go on, coming and going, until the end of the last evening prayers and then depart.*²⁹⁴

Ibn Jubayr's description presents the mosque as a centre of daily social events, resembling the function of earlier agoras and *fora*. These descriptions, which formed the basis of many Orientalist studies, particularly those of William and Georges Marçais, possibly explain Bianca's arguments that the presence of the mosque as a centre stage of daily events led to the interaction between the civic and religious life, not only on a spiritual level but also on an urban/architectural level.²⁹⁵ This interaction for him also allowed Islamic Sūqs to flourish into an orderly network of religiously-ascribed hierarchies, where the shops closer to the mosque symbolize concepts of purity, cleanliness and goodness, while the ones of lesser purity are pushed away to the boundaries of the fortified city. This religiously-mediated hierarchy, which does not seem to have affected earlier European examples (section 4.2), allowed the 'geography' of Sūqs to remain fairly uniform in almost all Islamic cities, where traders of perfume, incense, books, precious or imported goods such as silk, carpets and jewellery had a favourable position near the mosque. Bianca explores this idea relying on the Islamic duality of *taharah/najassah* (purity/pollution), echoing the **works** of other Orientalists, particularly **those** of William Marçais and Ira Lapidus, who suggest

²⁹⁴ Ibn Jubayr, *Travels of Ibn Jubayr*, edited by William Wright (Leyden: E.J. Brill, 1907), 266.

²⁹⁵ Bianca, *Urban Form in the Arab World*, 110-121.

that the persistence of such layout played an imperative role in situating Muslim Arabs within their ‘newly’ urbanized towns.²⁹⁶ This brings forth some differences between the religiously mediated meaning of Arabian Sūqs and the European conception of medieval market towns, whose urban logic was based on some political tactics for legalizing economic growth (section 4.2.3). This difference led many Orientalists, like Bianca, Marçais and Lapidus, to believe that the Sūq’s urban hierarchy developed around some religious meanings that governed the Sūq’s ‘morality’ and its modes of social participation.

Yet, Bianca’s studies portray that there exists an important social dimension in the design of Sūqs. For, his illustrations (Fig. 17) show that Sūqs were designed in one of two approaches, either as a linear arrangement occupying both sides of an alley, which “could be easily subdivided into interconnected individual sections,” or into an enclosed square structure around a central courtyard.²⁹⁷ Here, Bianca argues that the juxtaposed development of these shopping alleyways transforms them into mediators between the hidden residential quarters and the Sūq’s public space, becoming transitions in a ‘highly articulated and homogeneous urban universe.’²⁹⁸ He adds that the continuity of spatial experience from mosque, to market and then to home, all usually interacting under one roof, reinforces the idea of collective dwelling, where “the mosque would be the living room ... the Sūqs, equipped with long rows of cupboards, would represent the internal corridors, [and] the residential districts ... provide the private quarters.”²⁹⁹ This entwined web of social and religious relations produces layers of symbolic orders, which to Bianca seem to embody the overall dictums and cultural memories of Islamic societies, granting the Sūq a sense of familiarity and logic that protects the city “against uncurbed disorder.”³⁰⁰

²⁹⁶ Marçais, “L’Islamisme et la Vie Urbaine,” 96; Ira M. Lapidus, “The Evolution of Muslim Urban Society,” in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 15, no. 1 (1973): 21-50.

²⁹⁷ Bianca, *Urban Form in the Arab World*, 127.

²⁹⁸ Ibid.

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

³⁰⁰ Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space: The Classic Look at How We Experience Intimate Places*, 2nd. ed., edited by John R. Stilgoe, translated by Maria Jolas (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), 78.

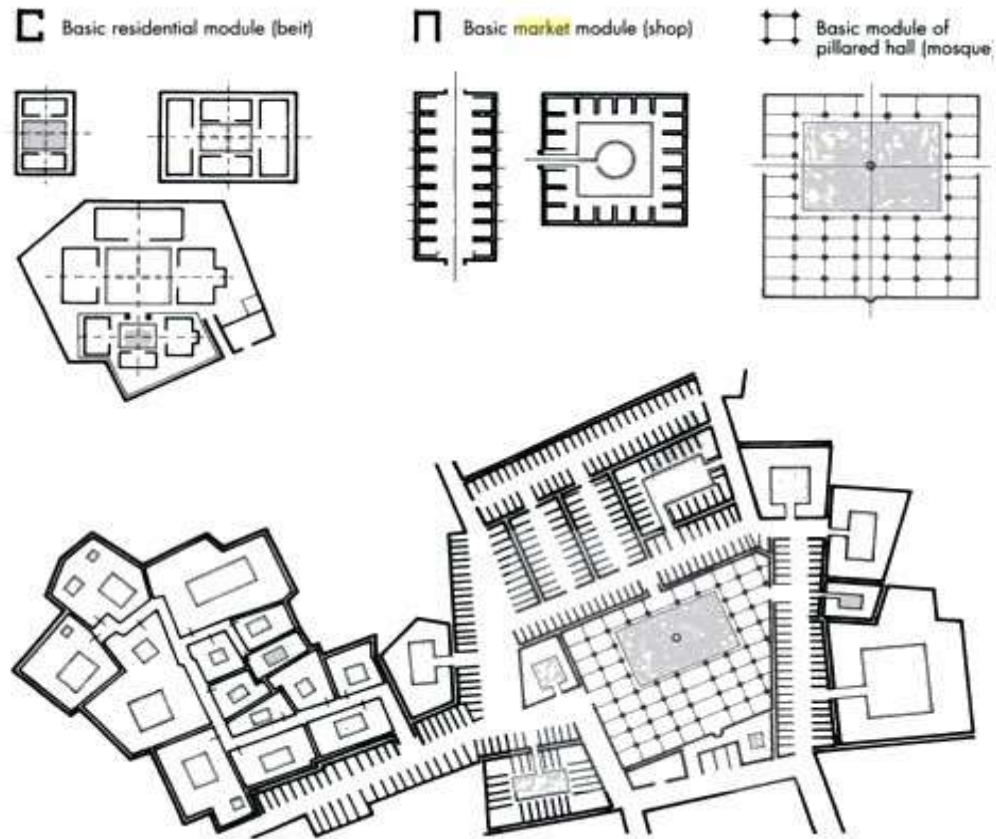


Figure 17 - Illustrations of the basic urban components in Fez, after Bianca p.153.

In this way, the Sūq becomes more than the totality of its architectural places, making room for various social activities and socio-urban negotiations. Lapidus agrees with this proposition, admitting that the criteria guiding an Islamic city's socio-urban experience vary from one place to another, injecting each socio-urban settlement with a particular memory and identity. He further argues that, "Muslim populations were organized into groups which formed sub communities within city spaces and super-communities of religion or state which extended beyond any city space."³⁰¹ Probably, the most important architectural type that resulted in such sub-divisions was the school or '*madrasa*,' which is considered by Rabbat a principle architectural structure adorning the neighbourhoods of most *Mamluk* urban spaces.³⁰² These schools were built in

³⁰¹ Ira Marvin Lapidus, "Muslim Cities and Islamic Societies," in *Middle Eastern Cities: A Symposium on Ancient, Islamic and Contemporary Middle Eastern Urbanism*, edited by Ira Marvin Lapidus (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), 73.

³⁰² Nasser Rabbat, *The Citadel of Cairo: A New Interpretation of Royal Mameluk Architecture* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995).

close proximity to the mosque and the market, providing society with educational and judiciary services. As noted by Lapidus, residents of specific neighbourhoods and even villagers coming to the Sūq for purposes of trade “were members of one or another of the schools in that they looked to the ‘*ulama*’ [scholars] for authoritative guidance on how to live a good Muslim life, for judicial relief, and for comfort and leadership in time of trouble.”³⁰³ Again, this social activity finds its historical foundations in the medieval era, as could be understood from Ibn Jubayr’s following account of al-Sharqiyah in Iraq,

*Al-Sharqiyah is full of markets and is greatly organized, and has three mosques (Jami’), and it has around thirty schools that the surpass in their greatness the greatest of the palaces, and its most famous school is al-Nidhamiyah built by Nidham al-Mulk.*³⁰⁴

The presence of these schools, some of which were dedicated to the teachings of specific Islamic sects, was one among the many reasons behind the urban segregation of different religious groups and ethnic minorities into separate quarters. Here, the Sūq emerges again as an ordering agent, regulating some complex socio-religious relations that were “ruled by a set of endogenous norms and behavioural standards that stemmed from the symbiosis between Islamic jurisprudence and the specific conditions of each location.”³⁰⁵

Another important ordering feature is the gate, which acts as a multi-layered division system between mosque, Sūq and residential quarters. For, the gates played a vital role in demarcating the boundaries of many Islamic city centres, as noted through Bianca’s studies as well as in the diaries of Ibn Battuta, who describes the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus and its gates, stating,

The mosque [Umayyad] has four doors: a southern one called Bab Ziyaddah... and outside this door there is a big alley, flanked by many shops, leading directly to the stables. To the door’s left, there is one of Damascus’s finest markets called Sammat al-Saffarin, in which Mo’aweyyah bin Suffyan and his people once resided ... The

³⁰³ Lapidus, “Muslim Cities and Islamic Societies,” 50.

³⁰⁴ Ibn Jubayr, *Travels of Ibn Jubayr*, 76. Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text: والشرقية حفيلة الاسواق عظيمة الترتيب ... وبها من الجوامع ثلاثة والمدارس بها نحو الثلاثين ... وما منها من مدرسة الا وهي بقصر القصر البديع عنها وأعظمها وأشهرها النظامية وهي التي بناها نظام الملك

³⁰⁵ Mustapha Ben Hamouche, “Can Chaos Theory Explain Complexity in Urban Fabric? Applications in Traditional Muslim Settlements,” *Nexus Network Journal: Architecture and Mathematics* 11, no. 2, edited by Kim Williams (Turin: Kim Williams Books, 2009): 224.

*mosque's eastern door, which is the grandest of all four, is called Bab Jayron and leads to a grand alley, at the end of which is a magnificent court with a running water stream ... The court ends with descending steps that usher you into another alley, flanked by giant circular colonnades, housing versatile shops.*³⁰⁶

In addition to their function as urban dividers, Shmuel Tamari believes that these gates are symbolic of the 'Doors of Paradise' and the 'Four Cardinal Points.'³⁰⁷ He further notes that these religiously mediated symbols endow a Muslim Arab street with a sense of spirituality, where the gates become not only passageways to the mosque or defensive shields against foreign invasions but also portals of some heavenly rewards. The names of many of these gates reinforce such proposition, like *Bab al-Nasr* (Door of Victory) in Cairo, *Bab a-Salam* (Door of Peace) in Damascus, *Bab al-Shuhadaā* (Door of Martyrs) in Kairouan, and *Bab al-Rahma* (door of Mercy) in Jerusalem.

A last example of prominent building types are the bathhouses or *hammams*, which aside from their social function, as public spaces for cleansing, relaxation and social gathering, offer Islamic societies some means for purification, in other words the physical implementation of '*taharah*.' Some purification rituals undertaken in the *hammams*, as described by Weiss and Westermann (section 1.4) and in William Lane's (1801 – 1876) travel diaries, include circumcision, bridal cleansing, preparation of pregnant women for delivery and most importantly daily ablution.³⁰⁸ Yet, the bath, or *hammam*, has been the subject of much enquiry—let alone fantasy—in the works of many Orientalist painters. For, Arab cities and *hammams* were depicted in many Orientalist paintings, such as those of Jean-Léon Gérôme, Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres, Eugène Delacroix, William Holman Hunt and David Roberts

³⁰⁶ Ibn Battuta, *Rihlat Ibn Battuta: Tuhfat al-andhar fi ghara'eb al-amsar wa 'ajaeib al asfar*, (رحلة ابن بطوطة: تحفة الأنظار فب غرائب الأمصار وعجائب الأسفار) Arabic, edited by Mohammed Abdul Mon'em al-'Eryan and Mustafa al-Kassas (Beirut: Dar Ihya'a al-'Oloum, 1987), 1:107-108. Translation is proposed by author.

³⁰⁷ Shmuel Tamari, *Iconotextual Studies in the Muslim Ideology of Umayyad Architecture and Urbanism* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1996), 6-8.

³⁰⁸ Walter M. Weiss and Kurt-Michael Westermann, *The Bazaar: Markets and Merchants of the Islamic World* (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd., 1998), 67; Edward William Lane, *Description of Egypt: Notes and Views in Egypt and Nubia Made During the 1825-28*, edited by Jason Thompson (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2000), 89.

to name a few. Examining the content of some of these paintings, there emerges a striking contrast in the methods through which the Arabian city has been perceived, conceptualized and depicted. Considering the French Orientalist tradition, represented by the works of Delacroix and Gérôme for example, it seems that most of the works revolve around a sensual interpretation of the ‘tabooed’ internal *harem* spaces, pointing to the possible influence of the imaginary stories of the *Arabian Nights* and/or the artists’ own Greco-Roman heritage. While some artists, like Rudolf Ernst (Fig. 19), marked the scenes with some Arabian entourage, others, like Gérôme (Fig. 18), re-interpreted it along the lines of ancient Roman baths. Yet, the problem here moves beyond the artistic representation of the *hammam*, hinting to some prejudices, where the idea of a *hammam* as a symbol of cleanliness or *taharah* in an Arab city seems to be associated with the Islamic space alone. In a way, limiting the significance of the *hamman* to this religiously constructed meaning tends to mask the historical development of social spaces in Arabia, such as the *hammam* or the *Sūq*, falsely suggesting that it is a *fadilah*, or an ethical merit, reserved solely for the Islamic urban space.³⁰⁹

³⁰⁹ The concept of *fadilah* (singular noun), or *fada’il* (plural of *fadilah*) is a concept found in medieval Islamic literature. According to Antrim’s above-cited book, this concept is used by al-Muqadessi, al-Baladhuri, Ibn-Jubayr and al-Maqrizi to describe the merits of medieval Islamic towns.



Figure 18 - Jean-Léon
Gérôme "La Grande
Piscine à Bursa," 1885.



Figure 19 - Rudolf Ernst
"The Harem Bath," 1854-
1932.

4.5 The Sūq as a Social Space

The following explores the Sūq's social dimension by looking at different issues, including gender-segregation and participation. Picking up from the previously discussed Orientalist paintings, it seems that the most realistic depictions of the Sūq were those presented by the artists belonging to the English tradition, with the works of David Roberts taken as an example here. Roberts's paintings depict the market streets of Egypt during the 19th century, using some distinctive architectural elements to set the theme for his compositions and to allow different characters to move naturally along his 'engineered' cityscapes. Aside from architecture, Roberts's painting (Fig. 20) offers glimpses of different forms of social relations, suggesting that the Sūq is a predominantly male playground.³¹⁰ This view is probably commensurate with the historical position that Roberts witnessed, yet is it still applicable today?

Current studies, like those of Bianca, Ragette and Weiss and Westermann, imply that this situation still persists, suggesting that the Sūq urban/architectural articulation acts as a 'third skin or garment for the family,' filtering between public spaces (or *Salamlek*) and residential spaces (or *Haramlek*).³¹¹ This is also deduced from Bianca's cross sections of some districts in the cities of Aleppo, Cairo and Fez (Fig. 21). Yet, Bianca notes that the idea of a *Haramlek* or *Haram* denotes not the private inner life an Arab Muslim society alone but seems to point beyond itself to some intrinsically social and religious memories of forbiddances, sanctities and taboos, where the terms of *Haram* and *al-Bayt* (the house) are associated with the image of the Holy *Kaaba* in Mecca.³¹² This idea is supported by the observations of British traveller Peter Lienhardt, when describing his experience in some Gulf towns during the early 20th century,

³¹⁰ Douglas Sladen, *Oriental Cairo: The City of the 'Arabian Night,'* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1911), 18.

³¹¹ Bianca, *Urban Form in the Arab World*, 125-127; Friedrich Ragette, *Traditional Domestic Architecture of the Arab Region* (Sharjah: American University of Sharjah, 2003); Weiss and Westermann, *The Bazaar*.

³¹² Bianca, *Urban Form in the Arab World*, 125-127.



Figure 20 - David Roberts Orientalist Paintings of the Market Street. Right, Painting (1842) of the Coppersmiths Street in Cairo. Left, Painting (1838) Bazaar al-Mooristan Mosque Street.

In the towns, the houses are built to be as private as possible, a wall usually being built inside the doorway in order to make impossible to see into the courtyard of the house from the street when the door is opened... The life of the women in the towns and villages is more secluded than that of the women of the desert, whereas the life of men is more gregarious. The suq becomes the centre of social life and every man spends part of his day there, sitting and talking with a wide variety of his fellow town men and with visitors to the town.³¹³

These socio-urban practices seem to be reinforced by the Islamic urban space itself, consolidating a Muslim Arab's religious view of the world. Examples here are ample, particularly in those architectural objects that allow the direct interaction between the outside and the inside, like doors, windows and courtyards. These elements present themselves as social filtering strategies that control the interaction between the house, as an individual living quarter, and the Sūq, as a communal space. One such filtering strategy includes the placement of outer doors, which were relatively small in both width and height, forcing those entering the main courtyard to lower their gazes and to delve individually to

³¹³ Peter Lienhardt, *Shaikhdoms of Eastern Arabia*, edited by Ahmed Al Shahi (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 224.

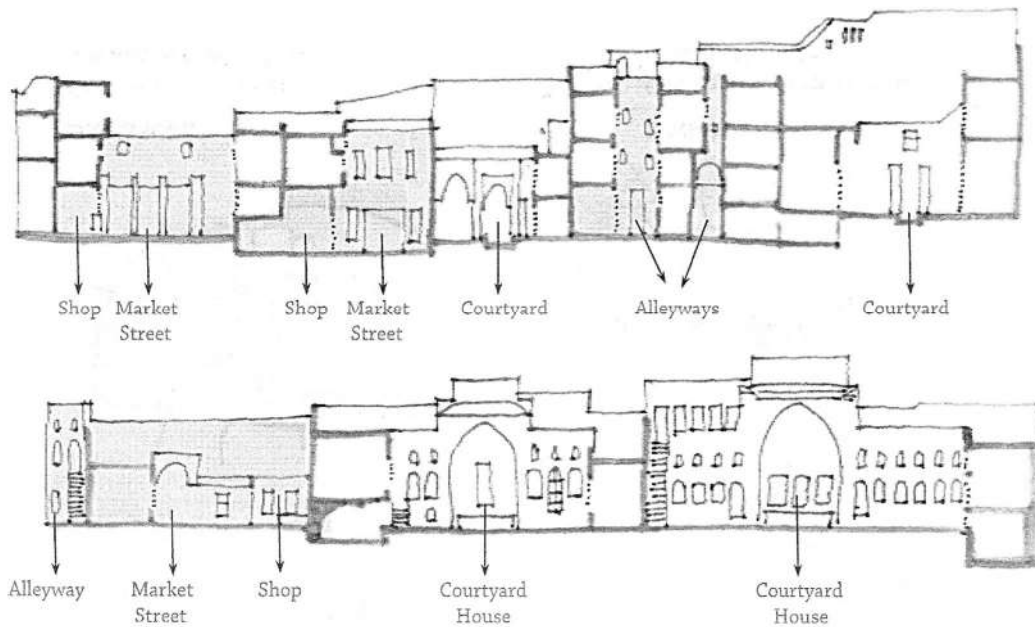


Figure 21 - Graphic illustrations portraying the relationship between the inside and the outside in the streets of Fez (top) and Aleppo (bottom). Illustrations by author after Bianca's work p.152.

the *Harem*. According to Friedrich Ragette, the doors of traditional Arabian houses have a high threshold, opening into an internal courtyard, which grants the house with needed privacy, as much as it allows air circulation and the sun rays to penetrate the interior of the residential enclaves without the need for external windows.³¹⁴ Other filtering agents include the loggias and verandas, which are usually positioned on the upper floors and are covered with *mashrabeya* screens to guarantee the privacy of the residents while still allowing them to stay in-touch with street events. The courtyards, which according to Ragette are considered 'the nucleus of Arab planning,' is the main circulation hub of the house and is a common ground for both males and females alike.³¹⁵ For this reason, the entrances of opposing houses are never aligned and windows overlooking neighbouring courtyards are avoided.

What about the social practices that take place outside of the residential enclaves? Lane's following description offers some insights about the Sūq's 19th century structure, noting that,

³¹⁴ Friedrich Ragette, *Traditional Domestic Architecture of the Arab Region* (Sharjah: American University of Sharjah, 2003), 54.

³¹⁵ Ragette, *Traditional Domestic Architecture of the Arab Region*, 59.

The dookka'n or shop is a square cell... Its floor is even with the top of the mus'tub'ah, which is a raised seat of stone or brick, built against the front, about two feet and a half in height, and the same in breadth... The shopkeeper generally sits on the mus'tub'ah [bench], which is covered with a piece of carpet or matting, and sometimes furnished with cushions. Here he transacts his business, smokes, eats, occasionally says his prayers, and chats with his customers; some of whom take off their shoes, and seat themselves with him, and remain, some time, smoking, and sipping coffee, which is brought from a neighbouring coffee-shop, and served in small china cups, each placed within a cup of brass... The shops do not communicate with the apartments above; which are in few cases tenanted by those who occupy the former... In either side of the great streets are by-streets and quarters ...³¹⁶

The above, which describes the author's memory of the place's socio-urban activities at a specific space in time, suggests some similarity to Lopez and Raymond's description of the development of Milan's marketplace (section 4.2.3). While this similarity in the market's physical structure possibly points to a congruent form of historical development (11th – 17th century), the modes of architectural articulation and the social practices adhered to each space seem to be different. In the case of the Cairene Sūq described above, the social outreach of the Sūq seems to extend beyond the limited space of the shops' enclosure, creating different forms of interaction. On the one hand, the physical positioning of the shop seems to create a social barrier between the street and the residential clusters above, a function that resembles to a great extent Milan's market description (section 4.2.3). On the other hand, the shop's 'mus'tub'ah' extends towards the street creating communicative links between the owner and the passers-by. Here, resting, observations, business transactions, fleeting discussions and deeds of hospitality take place within the larger sphere of the Sūq space. Even though these interactions were not identified in the example of Milan, politics seem to have played a big role in the socio-urban development of both medieval market types (section 4.2.3). The following will explore some aspects of such role and will look into its effects on our current understanding of Arabian Sūqs.

³¹⁶ Sladen, *Oriental Cairo*, 79.

4.6 The Sūq as a Political Space

The Sūq withdraws its political legitimacy from multiple sources. First is the economic value inherent in the space's urban function and trading activities, which are dependent on small privately-owned businesses connected to several production lines. This economic network is regulated by state laws, religious dictations and customs or what is known in Arabic as '*a'raf*.' An example of such norms is discussed in Annika Rabo's field study of the streets of Aleppo between 1998 – 1999, where she notes,

*Traders consider themselves independent and settled when they have an office or shop, but they are, at the same time, almost the prisoners of their shops... It is shameful ('aib), traders claim, not to open their shop... One day one informant complained that he was quite bored with the everyday routine of his shop-life, but that it would be shameful to close the shop and just take a holiday. Neighbours in the Sūq will often keep an eye on each other's stores if the owner has to rush off on an errand.*³¹⁷

Second, the presence of the mosque as the centre of most Sūqs allowed the frequent interaction between the rulers and their subjects, specifically during Friday prayer, when rulers, or their deputies, perform a ceremonial speech discussing the most pressing issues concerning political, social and religious welfare. Many historical Friday speeches are documented in the records of al-Tabari, al-Asfahani and al-Afghany.³¹⁸ They are also recounted throughout the course of *The Arabian Epics*, a series of folk tales about the heroic stories of Abu Zaid al-Hilali, al-Zanati Khalifa, al-Zir Salem, al-Zahir Bibars and A'antara bin Shaddad.³¹⁹ A contemporary adaptation of one such story is Gamal al-Ghitani's *Zayni Barakat* (2004), where he states,

³¹⁷ Annika Rabo, *A Shop of One's Own: Independence and Reputation among Traders in Aleppo* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 51.

³¹⁸ Al-Tabari, *The History of al-Ṭabarī*, translated by Franz Rosenthal (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989); Al-Asfahani, *Kitab al-Alghany* (كتاب الأغاني), Arabic (Cairo: Dar al-Kutub al-Masriyyah, 1936); Saeed Al-Afghany, *Aswaq al arab fil jahiliyyati wal islam* (أسواق العرب في الجاهلية والإسلام), Arabic, 3rd ed. (Beirut: Dar El Fikr, 1960). The book title could be translated as *The Sūqs of Arabs in Jahiliya and Islam*.

³¹⁹ The *Arabian Epics* is a series of orally recited (or sung with the aid of an instrument called '*Rababah*') stories throughout many rural areas in Egypt, Syria and Tunisia. They are composed of loosely structured verses and recited in regional dialects. Egyptian poet Abdul Rahman al-Abnudy compiled their content into a book titled *Al-Sira al-Hilaliyah* (1988), published in Cairo by Akhbar al-Youm in 5 vols.

Al-Zayni Barakat [Mamluk Egyptian ruler] is seen by the people of Cairo every day at least once, with drums beating in front of him and janissaries accompanying his procession. Al-Zayni is constantly checking market prices, condemning corruption; even people's strolling in the streets has regulations that must be adhered to ... I saw al-Zayni negotiating in person with sellers of desserts, cheese, and eggs; standing with farmers selling chicken, ice, geese, rabbits, and ducks; setting prices and prosecuting offenders.³²⁰

The above narrative is based not only on the fictitious tales of the *Arabian Epics* but also on many historical manuscripts that describe the governmental policies regulating the Sūqs' everyday life. One such manuscript is known as the correspondences of Qurra bin Sharik al-ʿAbsi (died 715 AD), the Umayyad ruler of Egypt from 709-715 AD. The scrolls, written in both Arabic and Latin, tell of the ruler's administrative and financial decrees, regulating the trade, pricing and taxation activities of Egyptian Sūqs during the 8th century AD (section 6.2.1).³²¹ Figure 21 shows a letter that Qurra wrote to his delegate regarding the sale of corn, stating,

To al-Fuṣṭāṭ. I have forsooth already remitted them the charges (maks) therefore (i.e., for the corn) and they may sell it at al-Fuṣṭāṭ. Do this quickly for I fear a rise in the price of the corn in al-Fuṣṭāṭ. For if I do not exact the charges in favour of the merchants they obtain a good profit. And, if it pleases God, the harvest will take place in forty nights or thereabouts ... Jarīr has written (it) in the month of Rabīʿ I of the year ninety-one.³²²

Third, the Sūq was the official broadcasting station of city news, a function that brings forth the original meaning of the term 'sāqa' (section 1.3). As understood from ancient, Islamic and contemporary Arabic poetry, these announcements are circulated in the Sūqs through *al-Munadi* (المنادي), or the caller, whose administrative job is to disseminate news, like birth, death, marriage or appointment of new officials, as well as to declare new legislations or court rules. The job of *al-Munadi*, which is found in almost all medieval cities due to a

³²⁰ Gamal Al-Ghitani, *Zayni Barakat*, translated by Farouk Abdel Wahab (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2004), 2.

³²¹ Adolf Grohmann, *Arabic Papyri in The Egyptian Library* (Cairo: Egyptian Library Press, 1938).

³²² Grohmann, *Arabic Papyri in The Egyptian Library*, 3:7-11 (no. 147).



Figure 23 - Image of *al-Munadi* (the Caller) as portrayed in Egyptian drama *Ali al-Zaibā* (1985), which is inspired from the Arabian Epic Stories.

comparable technological situation suggests again that there is some affinity between the medieval administrative processes in the East and West. Such similarity is also deduced from the previously discussed scrolls of Qurra bin Sharik, whose text is written in both Arabic and Latin. Yet, since the governance system of each region withdraws its legislative purposes from different sources, hence assuming divergent applications, the political workings of Islamic Arabia posed challenges on some Orientalist scholars, like Lassner and Creswell (section 4.2.3), leading them to believe the Islamic town to be lacking in municipal governance.³²³ A possible reason for such belief lies in these authors' marginalization of some particular modes of interaction between social organizations and governmental officials in the Sūqs of Arabia. One such interaction is activated through *al-Muhtaseb*, a medieval official envoy whose role was to enforce the proper implementation of Islamic jurisprudence and to control the fairness of market trade, as understood from al-Zayni Barakat's previous example, from the historical records of al-Gabarti and from the

³²³ Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, 1:22; Lassner, "Municipal Entities and Mosques: An Additional Note on the Imperial Center," 53-63.

contemporary works of Mohamed Gamal Abdelmonem.³²⁴ This interaction is also activated through *al-fotouwa*, a socially-appointed guardian whose role was to ensure his district's social peace and protect it against possible transgressions.³²⁵ While the role of *al-Muhtaseb* withdraws its legitimacy from some Quranic verses that emphasize the importance of 'enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong' (الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر),³²⁶ the idea of *al-fotouwa* points to some deeper tribal memories relating to the life of Arabs prior to the coming of Islam (section 5.5.2). This is understood from the process of becoming a *fotouwa* itself, which, according to the *Arabian Epics* (section 4.6), Naguib Mahfouz's novel *Al-Harafish* and Yasser Thabet's book *Fotowat wa Afendeya*, requires winning several duels and proving to be invincible in street fights.³²⁷ The following contemporary poem describes important roles played by the *fotouwa*,

*This is your history son... these are the country's fotouwa... who
planted the seeds of chivalry... the fotouwa had borders... and he
gave the poor... and defended his district... he always looked like a
groom... as if he were a judge or president... and on Thursday
nights' weddings... he kept peace among all... these were the
country's fotouwas.*³²⁸

The concept of 'border' in the above poem suggests that architecture, in the form of gates; and urbanism, in the form of market streets, were in themselves tools that reinforced the political and social governance of different Arab districts, demarcating a *fotouwa*'s geographic locality and judicial authority. While there exist other social groups governing an Arabian Sūqs' everyday life —like *sheikh*

³²⁴ Al-Gabarti, *Tareekh al-Gabarti* (تاريخ عجائب الآثار في التراجم والأخبار تاريخ الجبرتي), edited by Ibrahim Shams Eldien (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, 1822), 3:173; Mohamed Gamal Abdelmonem, *The Architecture of Home in Cairo: Socio-Spatial Practice of the Hawari's Everyday Life* (London: Routledge, 2015), 135-136.

³²⁵ Al-Gabarti, *Tareekh al-Gabarti*, 1:35. Refer to Appendix 11-A12, section 5 for contemporary descriptions of the *fotouwa*'s role in the Sūqs of Nablus.

³²⁶ Quran (*al-Hajj*) 22:41, English translation, <https://quran.com/22> (accessed Nov. 28, 2018)."

³²⁷ Naguib Mahfouz, *The Harafish*, translated by Catherine Cobham (Egypt: First Anchor Books, 1995); Yasser Thabet, *Fotowat wa afendeya* (فتوات وافنديّة), Arabic (Cairo: Dar Safsafa, 2010).

³²⁸ Sayed Siddik Abdul Fattah, *Tarikh fotouwat Misr wa ma'arekhom al-damiyah* (تاريخ فتوات مصر ومعاركهم الدامية), Arabic (Cairo: Matba'at Madbouly, 1995), 3-4. Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

أهو ده تاريخك يا ولد... أهو دول فتوات البلد... بدروا بذور المجدة...
كان الفتوة له حدود... وكان على الغلبان وجود... وكان على حيه بذود...
كان مظهره زي العريس... تقولش قاضي أو رئيس... وفي الفرح يوم الخميس...
يضبط فرح كامل العدد... أهو دول فتوات البلد...



Figure 24 - Caricature drawing by Ahmed 'Ashour, depicting a scene in Naguib Mahfouz's *al-Harafish*.

al-tujjar (head of merchants) and *sheikh al-harah* (head of the street), the above examples offer brief glimpses on the different types of governance systems that seem to have shaped an Arabian Sūq's political life. In this light, the Sūq reveals itself as a space for everyday politics and power struggles, or more accurately "a space of flows as opposed to a space of places," to use Elsheshtawy term.³²⁹ For Elsheshtawy, the idea of flow refers to the movement of ideas—religious, social and political—and not only with the physical movement of pedestrians and goods. This idea is further reflected in the Sūq's architectural practices, which were regulated by what Islamic historians refer to as '*Fiqh al-Omran al-Islami*' (the Jurisprudence of Islamic Urbanism), a topic that has been originally introduced through the writings of Medieval Islamic scholars Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406) and Ibn Abi al-Rabi' (733 885). According to Ibn Khaldun, the building of great

³²⁹ Elsheshtawy, *The Evolving Arab City*, 8.

towns and magnificent monuments is a task that requires political stability. By setting the following guidelines for proper city planning, he argues that,

*The purpose of (building towns) is to have places for dwelling and shelter... For the protection of towns, all the houses should be situated inside a surrounding wall... To protect towns against harmful atmospheric phenomena, one should see to it that the air is wholesome, in order to be safe from illness.*³³⁰

Similarly, Ibn Abi al-Rabi' defines eight city planning guidelines that contribute to the social, cultural, religious, political, economic and sanitary wellbeing of towns.³³¹ As explained by Khaled Azab, Ibn Abi al-Rabi' recommendations deal with issues relating to water supply, comfortable road delineation and transport methods, central positioning of mosques, adequate number of market stalls in relation to the number of city dwellers and the prevention of conflict through social segregation strategies.³³² Accordingly, Islamic city planning was thought of as a practical task that corresponds to the needs of city dwellers and to the political stability of the state. Still, these authors emphasize that the philosophy of building Islamic cities encapsulates further religious implications that have shaped and sustained their existence. Chief among these factors is the Islamic principle of '*la darar wala dirar*' (لا ضرر ولا ضرار), loosely translated as 'not to be harmed and not to harm.' Such philosophy granted Islamic public spaces some general guidelines for social participation, where each property, whether residential or commercial, has clearly defined boundaries that cannot be harmed whether directly or indirectly—through noise, smell, obstruction of sunlight or flow of fresh air. This explains the previously discussed hierarchical typology of market stalls/shops and their relation to each other, adjacent residential clusters and to nearby civic buildings, a proposition that brings about the major Islamic ideas concerning the law of building itself.³³³

³³⁰ Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, edited by N. J. Dawood, translated by Franz Rosenthal (UK: Princeton University Press, 1967), 267.

³³¹ This argument is presented in Ibn Abi al-Rabi's transcript titled *Solouk al-malek fi tadbeer al-mamalek* (سلوك المالك في تدبير الممالك), explained in Khaled Azab's below cited book.

³³² Khaled Azab, *Fiqh al-omran: Al-dawlah wal mujtama'a wal a'amarah fi hadarat al-muslimin* (فقه العمران: الدولة والمجتمع والعمارة في حضارة المسلمين), Arabic (Cairo: Al-Dar al-Misriya al-Lubnaniya, 2008), 11-12.

³³³ Azab, *Fiqh al-omran*, 23.

4.7 Conclusion: The Arabian Sūq in-between Prejudice and Prehension

This chapter attempted to construct a general image of the idea of a marketplace and its development at different historical phases. While the chapter did not exhaust all types of markets, it still attempted to establish some formalistic links between the medieval Islamic city's Sūqs and some European market towns, assuming that such links played some role in the Sūqs' perception and conceptualization in variable Orientalist, Arabic and Islamic sources. By doing so, the review pointed to some prejudices that encircle our current understanding of Sūqs, chief among them is the inseparable bond between the Sūq and the Islamic city. For, the literature review discussed how the current understanding of Arabian Sūqs in both Orientalist and revisionist studies is based on an abstracted image of the medieval Islamic town. This image seems to resemble a shell structure (Fig. 25), which constitutes of city walls that encircle an open 'empty' processional space. Through its serpentine emptiness, the Sūq undulates inwards towards the heart of the city, or the mosque. The hidden residential quarters and auxiliary buildings, such as baths, caravansaries, tax houses and schools, become special nodes demarcating a further set of hierarchies along the winding Sūqs, defining their respective value to the mosque. The gates punctuate the outer walls of the city, acting as religious and military protective shields. This abstracted analogy suggests that Islamic Arabia's mode of dwelling in space is based on some form of 'franchised urbanism,' where the development of the Sūq typology around a central mosque became an archetypical winning formula that has been tested and packaged during the early periods of Islam, then exported and franchised adaptively as templates of Islamic urban configuration to various spots in the world. While such image is possibly influenced by the reviewed authors' accumulated knowledge on the Greek agora's 'empty' social space (section 4.2.1) or the standardised Roman *castrum* plan (section 4.2.2), it still offers little explanation about the relevance of this alleged 'Islamic' layout or the different socio-urban meanings engendered from experiencing the Sūq's seemingly 'empty' space. For this reason, the review looked for some formalistic similarities in the layout of medieval Islamic and European markets to identity whether there

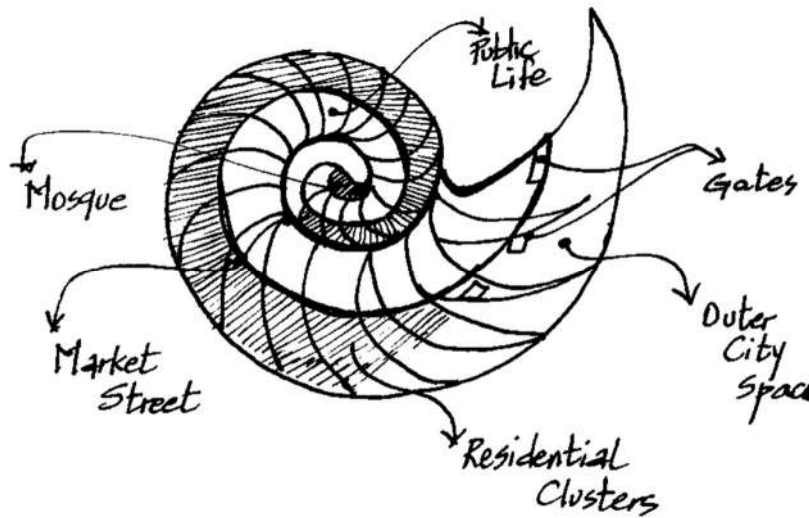


Figure 25 - Hypothetical Adaptation of Bachelard's Snail-City onto the Islamic City. By author.

is any congruence in the socio-urban patterns of participation and meaning-making. While the review highlighted some physical similarities in the layout of some marketplaces in Europe and Arabia, it discovered that the social meanings engendered from each's experience varies due to some socio-cultural particularities. Accordingly, an important question to be raised here is what are the structures and patterns of Arab culture that seem to have influenced the Sūq's historical development and its modes of socio-urban experience?

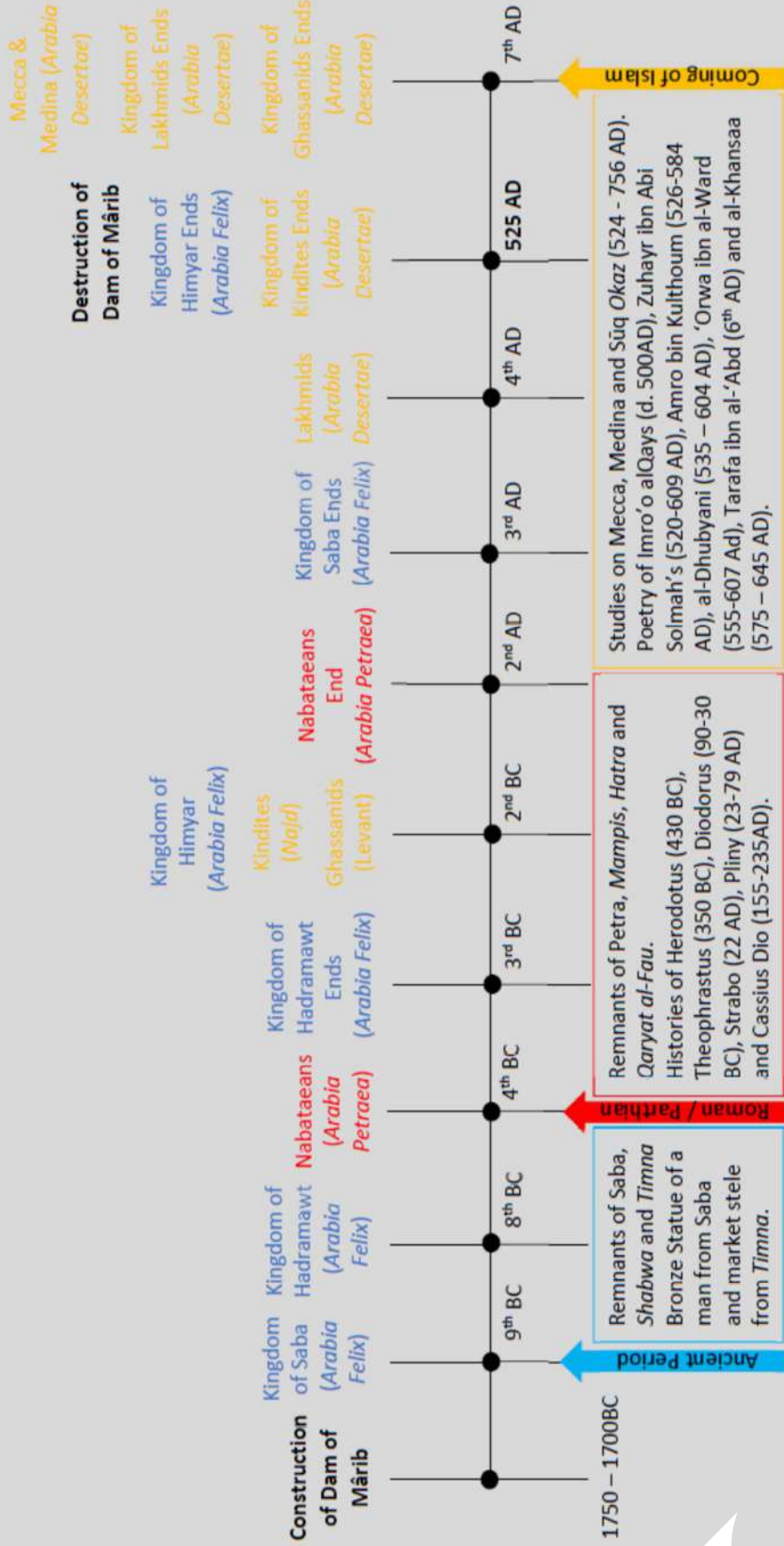
The next chapters will attempt to answer this question, yet it is important to conclude here with some methodological insights uncovered through the literature review. The review demonstrated that counterpoising physical evidences with contemporaneous poetry, artworks and literature can assist in reaching a better interpretation of socio-urban phenomena. For, without such narratives, it would be hard to effectively situate the phenomenon's social meaningfulness within its apposite historical context, or to explain the effects of its physical morphology on one's perception and experience of the space at a particular historical situation. The following chapters will employ this approach to uncover the extent and nature of such meaningful-ness, if any, arguing that the Arabian Sūq, as a franchised prototype did not only export the physical structures of a Sūq

alone but possibly also transported the dialectic tensions constituting its everyday practices, memory and ritualistic orders. Accordingly, the following will test the possibility that the Sūq's original memory and rituals are based on a historical narrative that is much earlier than that of Islam, and that the Sūq's embodied meanings probably intend the simulation of an Arab's Pre-Islamic memory of the desert and the trade route. To do so, the research will juxtapose physical and poetic evidences to examine whether and why the Islamic reading of the Arab city is (ir)relevant today. The research will also test whether and how the Arabian Sūq's experience changed over different historical situations, questioning the effects, if any, of some Pre-Islamic cultural references, primarily those related to the desert—as a *fadaā*—and the trade route—as a *tareeq*—in shaping the Arabian socio-urban discourse during its Islamic and Post-Islamic periods. By doing so, the following aspires to restore continuity between some particular Arabian meanings, which seem to have “secretly structured the determining conditions of social life,” at a specific place and time.³³⁴ So, the following sections will examine,

1. The historical effects that guided the development of the Arabian Sūq phenomenon from its Pre-Islamic period until present.
2. The role of language, as a ‘living tradition,’ in rehabilitating some particular social meanings and cultural memories that are directly related to the Sūq's experience at different historical contexts.³³⁵
3. The manifestation of the concept of Sūq-ness in the region's ritualistic activities, particularly street festivals, at different spatial and temporal situations.

³³⁴ Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 96.

³³⁵ Kristina Zolatova, “Gadamer on Language and Being,” *PER CARITATEM* (August, 2009), <http://percaritatem.com/2009/08/28/gadamer-on-language-and-being/> (accessed 5th November 2017).



Arabia Felix

Arabia Petraea

Arabia Desertae

5

Chapter Five

Interpretation of the Parts (1)

Pre-Islamic Sūqs in-between *fadaā* and *tareeq*

5.1 Introduction

The relevance of the Arabian Sūq is hinged on many social, political and religious practices that substantiated its historical development. This is suggested through the literature review, which also showed that the current understanding of the Sūq is influenced by many prejudices, some of which are derived from Orientalist interpretations while others are resultant from some Islamic views that dismiss the possibility that Pre-Islamic Arabian cultural products contributed to the region's socio-urban development. So, this chapter will focus on some of these possible contributions, arguing that the Sūq, as a cultural 'fragment,' to use Lewis Mumford's term, draws its socio-urban legitimacy from a historical discourse that is much earlier than its current Islamic presuppositions.³³⁶

¹ Lewis Mumford, *The Culture of Cities* (New York: Harvest Books, 1970), 73.

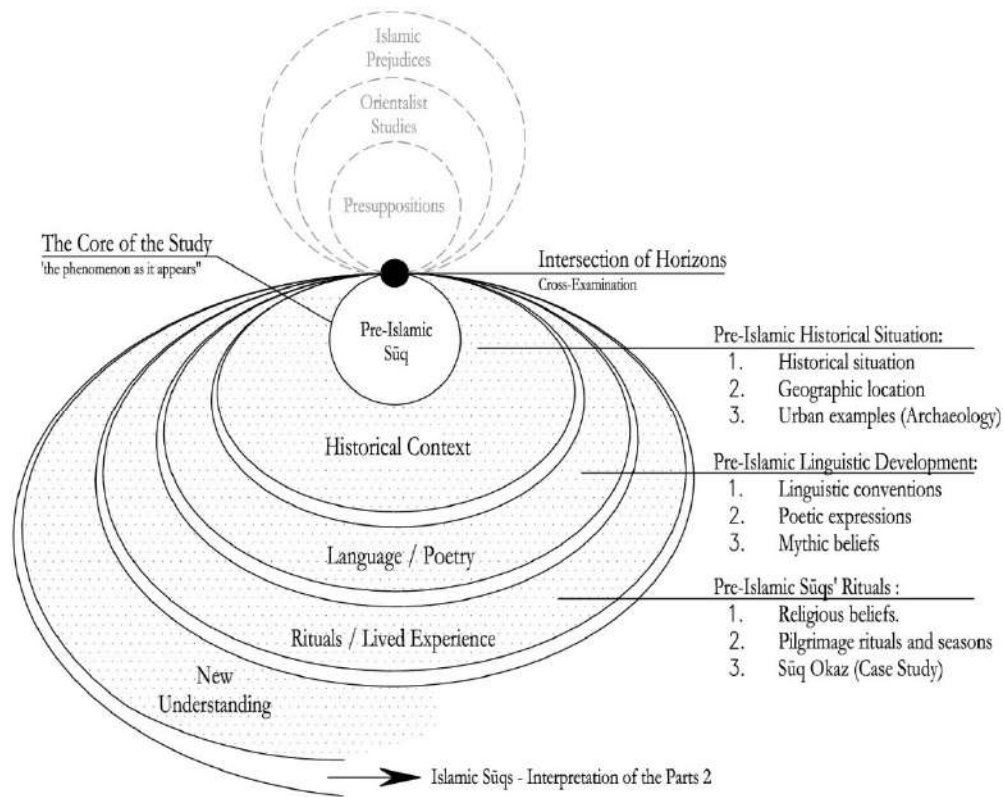


Figure 26 - Hermeneutic Circle of Pre-Islamic period, portraying the different research variables and examined data pools. Illustration by author.

So, this chapter presents the first interpretative stage of the Arabian Sūq, exploring its early Pre-Islamic beginnings in terms of modes of socio-urban participation and the various political, religious and cultural factors that influenced its perception, lived experience and festive rituals. By doing so, the chapter intends to identify a set of socially-constructed meanings that seem to underpin a Pre-Islamic Arab's experience of the Sūq and to explain how these meanings, if any, contributed to the historical development of the Sūq event. The chapter starts by defining the Pre-Islamic historical situation, discussing the original definition of the term 'Arab' and exploring the different tribal settlements that emerged during the period preceding the rise of Islam. Then, the chapter traces the locations and rituals of Pre-Islamic seasonal Sūqs, pointing to their role in liaising the different Arab settlements of the time. Afterwards, the chapter examines the urban development of some Pre-Islamic towns situated on the ancient trade route, exploring their versatile architectural, social and religious symbolism. By doing so, the chapter attempts to trace the different historical effects encircling a Pre-Islamic Arab's experience and understanding of Sūqs,

using urban maps, archaeological remnants, reliefs and sculptures as primary sources. This is followed by an in-depth study of Pre-Islamic poetry and its general conventions, focusing on some common structures and patterns of expressions that were used to describe a Pre-Islamic Arab's understanding of Sūq-ness. The chapter concludes with a multi-tiered thematic analysis, where the reviewed elements of Pre-Islamic history, language and lived experience are studied as perpetual circles of interrelated meanings. This process presents the first step towards a holistic application of Gadamer's hermeneutic circle in this research (section 3.2), following his argument that rituals and rhetoric establish "the *ethos* in living together."³³⁷ The term *ethos* is of critical importance here (section 2.4.1), referring to "the distinguishing character, sentiment, moral nature or guiding beliefs of a person, group or institution."³³⁸ Accordingly, the purpose of the thematic analysis is to identify some overarching *ethos* in Pre-Islamic Arabia, and to uncover some unforeseen Sūq-related meanings that were possibly missed by some of the previously discussed studies (Chapter 4).

5.2 Historical Context: Pre-Islamic Arab-ness and Sūq-ness

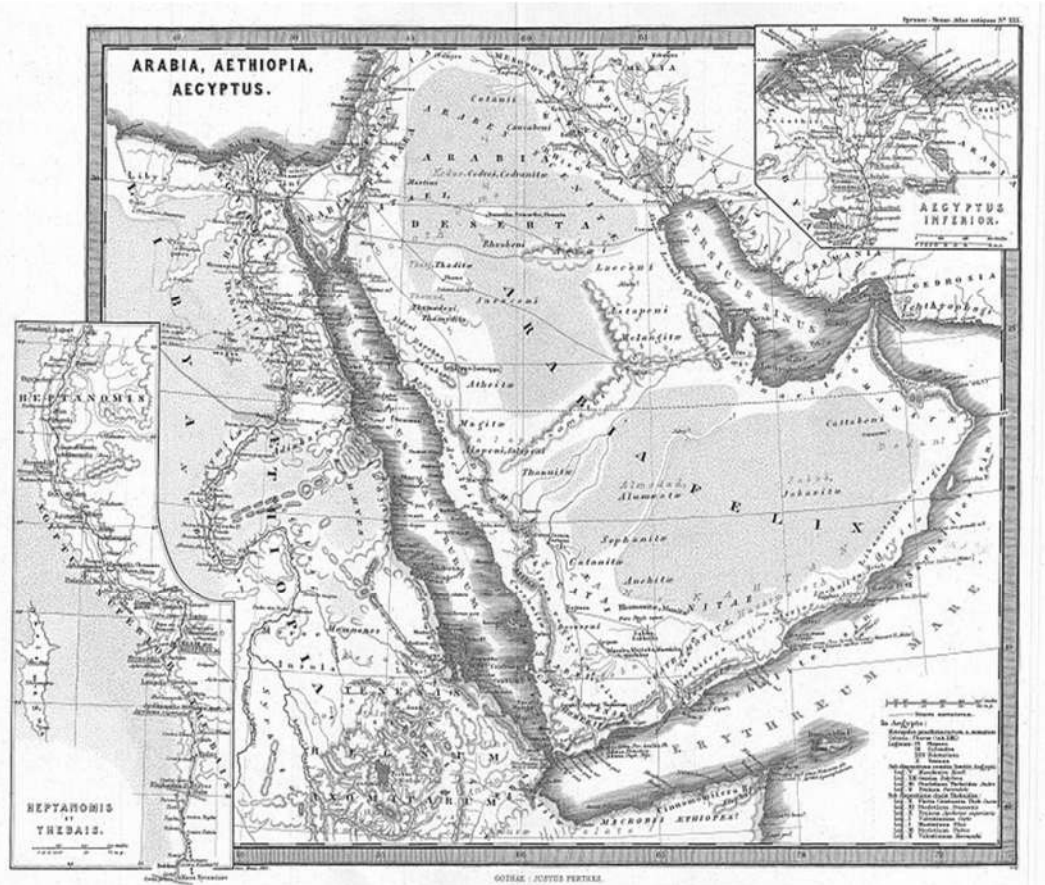
As discussed in sections 1.2, 1.4.1 and 4.3, most current researchers seldom examine the Pre-Islamic Arabian era sufficiently, focusing instead on some fragmented events that preceded Prophet Mohammed's (PBUH) life in Mecca. This implies that prior to the coming of Islam Arabia was an insignificant player in world events and that its people were nomadic communities of little cultural potency. Yet, the works of Robert Hoyland, Jawad Ali and Georgi Zidan on the urban anthropology of Pre-Islamic Arabia suggest that it was not a mere territory on the periphery of great ancient empires but was a centre of cultural, social and economic affluence that offered its people and its neighbouring superpowers—Persia and Rome—the means for safe trade.³³⁹ This is deduced

³³⁷ Gadamer, "Towards a Phenomenology of Ritual and Language," 46.

³³⁸ *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, s.v. "ethos," <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ethos> (accessed Sept. 9, 2017)

³³⁹ Robert Hoyland, *Arabia and the Arabs: From the Bronze Age to the Coming of Islam* (London: Routledge, 2002); Jawad Ali, *Al-mufasssal fi tareekh al-Arab kabl al-Islam* (المفصل في تاريخ العرب قبل الإسلام), Arabic, 2nd ed., (Baghdad: University of Baghdad, 1993); Georgi Zidan, *Al arab kabl*

Figure 27 - Karl von Spruner's 1865 rendering of Arabia, Aethiopia (Ethiopia) and Egypt (Aegyptus) in antiquity. Centered on the Red Sea or Mare Rubrum, this map covers the entirety of the Arabian Peninsula, the Persian Gulf, and the Nile Valley.



from some historical records (maps and travellers' journals) that explain the nature of 'global' trade of the time, most of which was controlled and safeguarded by the kingdoms of Arabia (section 5.3). For, the antique incense and silk land routes, as described by Hoyland, Ali and Zidan (sections 5.2 - 5.4), started in Arabia at the South ports of Yemen. Trading caravans then traversed the vast expanses of the Arabian desert before reaching their final destination at the seaports of Gaza, Aleppo or Alexandria (Fig. 29).³⁴⁰ It is also believed that the people that we currently define as Arabs were the descendants of some Yemeni tribes, who migrated before or right after the destruction of the Dam of Mârib in 525AD.³⁴¹ These migrants settled in different locations north, northeast and

al-Islam (العرب قبل الإسلام), Arabic, 2nd ed. (Cairo: Al Hilal, 1922). Ali's book title could be translated as *The Detailed History of Arabs before Islam*; Zidan's book title could be translated as *The Arabs before Islam*.

³⁴⁰ Hoyland, *Arabia and the Arabs*, 2.

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 157.

northwest of Yemen, establishing some of the most prominent kingdoms in the region. Aside from their strategic location on the crossroad of ancient trade and their production of aromatics, the Arabs also possessed the indispensable skill for crossing the inhabitable desert of Central Arabia, providing ancient Rome and Persia with needed military and economic assistance during wartime.³⁴² Still, if we are to initiate an informed investigation about the development of the Arabian Sūq phenomenon and the implication of its evolution on a Pre-Islamic Arab's perception and experience of the world, some important questions need to be addressed. First, what characterizes a Pre-Islamic Arab? Second, what are the geographic, political and religious effects encircling the life of a Pre-Islamic Arab? Third, what was the role of Sūqs in Pre-Islamic Arabia?

5.2.1 Pre-Islamic Arab-ness: Definitions and Descriptions

Etymological references offer many possible roots for the word 'Arab,' relegating its origin to the term '*gharab*' or West, as noted by medieval geographer Abu Muhammad al-Hasan al-Hamdani (893-945AD), who believed that the Arabs were referred to as the Western islanders by Mesopotamians.³⁴³ Another medieval historian, Shams Qais al-Razi, argues that the term refers to '*Ya'rub*,' a pre-Islamic king, who was the first to speak Arabic.³⁴⁴ In Hebrew and Biblical etymology, the term '*arvi*' and/or '*arvim*' is used to describe the mixture of nomads who lived in the desert and constantly moved around.³⁴⁵ The Semitic root '*-r-b*' and its variable grammatical usages support some of the above viewpoints and suggest further meanings, like "west/sunset," "desert," "mingle," "mixed," "merchant," and "raven."³⁴⁶ So, it could be argued that the root of the

³⁴² Hoyland, *Arabia and the Arabs*, 2.

³⁴³ Abu Muhammad al-Hasan al-Hamdani, *Sifat jazirat al-Arab* (صفات جزيرة العرب), Arabic (Leiden: Brill, 1884), 1:46-47. Book title could be translated as *The Characteristics of Arabia*.

³⁴⁴ Stefan Sperl, *Mannerism in Arabic Poetry: A Structural Analysis of Selected Texts, 3rd century AH/9th century AD-5th century AH/11th century AD*, Illustrated ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 209.

³⁴⁵ Bible, *Isaiah* 21:13 and *Ezekiel* 27:21.

³⁴⁶ Edward Lipinski, *Semitic Languages: Outlines of a Comparative Grammar*, 2nd ed. (Leuven: Orientalia Lovanensia Analecta, 2001), 48-50.

term Arab is related to some specific patterns and structures of experience, where desert, trade and language take precedence.

Still, the land of Arabia was seldom considered a homogeneous entity, comprising of three distinct cultures: *Arabia Petraea* (West), *Arabia Felix* (South) and *Arabia Deserta* (Centre and East), as shown in Fig. 27.³⁴⁷ The description of these regions is found in many historical accounts, like those of Herodotus, Strabo and Diodorus Siculus.³⁴⁸ Herodotus's *The Histories*, Book III (originally written c. 430BC), describes Arabia as, "the last of inhabited lands towards the south, and it is the only country which produces frankincense, myrrh, cassia, cinnamon, and laudanum."³⁴⁹ Herodotus's account offers further insights on the overall moral characteristics of these Arabs, who, according to him, honour their promises and readily answer pledges of friendship. In this regard, he notes ,

*When two men would swear a friendship, they stand on each side of a third: he with a sharp stone makes a cut on the inside of the hand of each near the middle finger, and, taking a piece from their dress, dips it in the blood of each, and moistens therewith seven stones lying in the midst, calling the while on Bacchus and Urania.*³⁵⁰

Herodotus's above account probably refers to *Arabia Felix*, or Ancient Yemen, and its many thriving yet competing kingdoms. Later historical records indicate a mass migration from Yemen, resulting in the establishment of different settlements in the Arabian Peninsula. Strabo's *Geography*, written around 22 AD, describes these new settlements and compares them to their older counterparts.³⁵¹ Similar to Herodotus, he prefers *Arabia Felix*, noting that,

The country of the Sabaei, a very populous nation, is contiguous and is the most fertile of all, producing myrrh, frankincense, and cinnamon. Mariaba, the capital of the Sabaeans, is situated upon a

³⁴⁷ Georgi Zidan, *Al arab kabl al-Islam (العرب قبل الإسلام)*, Arabic, 2nd ed. (Cairo: Al Hilal, 1922), 30.

³⁴⁸ Herodotus, *The Histories of Herodotus* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1898); Strabo, *The Geography of Strabo: Literally Translated*, with Notes, trans. by H. C. Hamilton and W. Falconer (London: H. G. Bohn, 1854-1857); Diodorus Siculus, "The Library of History, Vol. II: Loeb Classical Library Edition, 1935," under *Bill Thayer's Website*, http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/e/roman/texts/diodorus_siculus/2b*.html (accessed February 7, 2017).

³⁴⁹ Herodotus, *The Histories of Herodotus*, 107.

³⁵⁰ Ibid., 226.

³⁵¹ Strabo, *The Geography of Strabo*, Book XVI, iv.19-22.

*mountain, well wooded. A king resides there, who determines absolutely all disputes and other matters; but he is forbidden to leave his palace, or if he does so, the rabble immediately assail him with stones, according to the direction of an oracle... The people cultivate the ground, or follow the trade of dealing in aromatics... There is such an abundance of these aromatics, that cinnamon, cassia, and other spices are used by them instead of sticks and firewood. By the trade in these aromatics both the Sabaeans and the Gerrhaei have become the richest of all the tribes, and possess a great quantity of wrought articles in gold and silver, as couches, tripods, basins, drinking-vessels, to which we must add the costly magnificence of their houses; for the doors, walls, and roofs are variegated with inlaid ivory, gold, silver, and precious stones. . .*³⁵²

When describing *Arabia Petraea*, he claims that,

*The capital of the Nabataeans is called Petra. It is situated on a spot which is surrounded and fortified by a smooth and level rock (Petra), which externally is abrupt and precipitous, but within there are abundant springs of water both for domestic purposes and for watering gardens. Beyond the enclosure the country is for the most part a desert, particularly towards Judaea... Athenodorus, a philosopher, and my friend, who had been to Petra, used to relate with surprise that he found many Romans and also many other strangers residing there. He observed the strangers frequently engaged in litigation, both with one another and with the natives; but the natives had never any dispute amongst themselves and lived together in perfect harmony.*³⁵³

As for the Nabataeans' urban strategies, Strabo notes that the city of Petra is without walls or fortifications, which he believes is a direct result 'of the peace which prevails among' the people.³⁵⁴ While Strabo's account provides ample descriptions of *Arabia Felix* and *Arabia Petraea*, little is mentioned in his account about *Arabia Deserta*. In contrast to Strabo, Diodorus of Sicily's (90 – 30 BC) descriptions of Nabataeans is not a favourable one, noting that they live in an ill-smelling rocky land, scarce in water and of a harsh environment, transferring much of its austerity on the nature of the people, who display an unyielding, let alone unruly, attitude.³⁵⁵ Still, Diodorus's account provides a clear geographical

³⁵² Strabo, *The Geography of Strabo*, Book XVI., iv.19.

³⁵³ Ibid., iv.21.

³⁵⁴ Ibid.

³⁵⁵ Ibid, iv.49.

differentiation between the three Arabian regions and their socio-political organizations, noting,

*That part of Arabia as a whole which lies to the south is called Felix, but the interior part is ranged over by a multitude of Arabians who are nomads and have chosen a tent life. These raise great flocks of animals and make their camps in plains of immeasurable extent... The remaining part of Arabia, which lies towards Syria, contains a multitude of farmers and merchants of every kind.*³⁵⁶

The above accounts provide some general descriptions of the Pre-Islamic Arabian situation, highlighting some of the socio-urban characteristics of an Arab then. The following will expand these definitions through a discussion of the period's geo-political and religious situation to get a deeper understanding of this historical era and to question some accumulated prejudices that are currently "pinning Arab identity onto an archaic tableau [and] entrenching an iconic image of the Arabs' original state in a sublime exotic desert."³⁵⁷

5.2.2 Pre-Islamic Arabia: Geographic, Political and Religious Situations

As understood from the above records, *Arabia Felix* is the cradle of Pre-Islamic Arab-ness. According to Georgi Zidan, the construction of the Dam at Mârib (around 1750-1700BC) allowed this area to acquire an organized urban character, to implement various agricultural methods and to expand the ancient incense trade route across Asia, Africa and Europe. From 9th century BC to 525 AD, *Arabia Felix* flourished, witnessing the rise and fall of many successive kingdoms, such as Kingdom of Saba (9th BC – 275 AD), Kingdom of Hadramawt (8th BC – 3rd BC) and Kingdom of Himyar (2nd BC – 525AD).³⁵⁸ Some historians, like Ibn-Khaldun and Zidan, believe that the destruction of the Dam at Mârib (around 525 AD), forced some South Arabian tribes to migrate northward,

³⁵⁶ Zidan, *Al arab kabl al-Islam*, 61.

³⁵⁷ Peter Webb, "The Origins of the Arabs: Middle Eastern Ethnicity and Myth-making," in *Imagining the Arabs: Arab Identity and the Rise of Islam* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), 36.

³⁵⁸ Zidan, *Al arab kabl al-Islam*, 30.

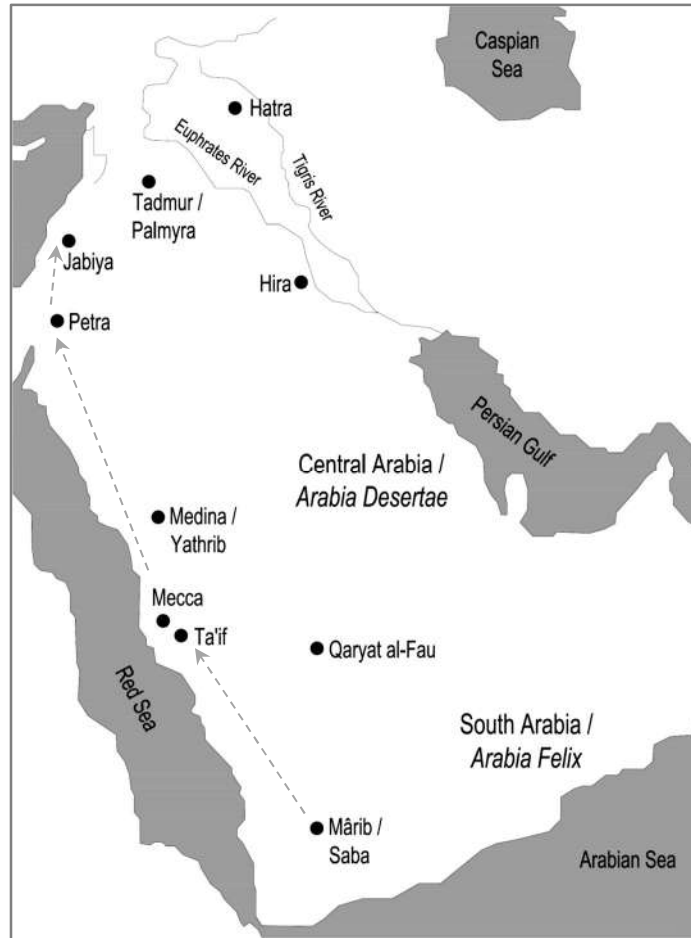


Figure 28 – Map of Pre-Islamic Arabian Settlements, by author after Shahid's cited book, p. 421. The map locates the capitals of some Pre-Islamic Arabian kingdoms that are discussed in section 5.4. The arrows are indicative of Shahid's work, where he attempts to trace the possible migration path of the Ghassanids.

gradually expanding Arabian presence throughout the region.³⁵⁹ Yet, archaeological remnants, some of which will be discussed in sections 5.3.1 - 5.3.5, suggest that such migration took place before the destruction of the Dam, due to some unknown circumstances as noted by Irfan Shahid (Fig. 28).³⁶⁰ This resulted in the establishment of various Arabian settlements, like the Ghassanids in Jabiya (the Levant from 220AD-638AD), the Lakhmids in Hira (Iraq from a.300AD – 602AD), the Nabataeans in Petra (4thBC-2ndAD) and the Kindites in Najd (Central Arabia from 2nd BC – 525AD). The history of these Arabian kingdoms is characterized by intertribal rivalries, leading to many coalitions

³⁵⁹ Zidan, *Al arab kabl al-Islam*, 104-111; Ibn Khaldun, *Al-Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, edited by N. J. Dawood, translated by Franz Rosenthal (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), 99-100.

³⁶⁰ Irfan Shahid, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Sixth Century: Part I Vol. II* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2002), 2:2.

either with the Romans or the Persians depending on geographic proximity or mutual interests.³⁶¹ Further north, near the Egyptian borders of Sinai, is *Arabia Petraea*, ruled by the Nabataeans from 4th BC to 2nd AD, occupying northern Hejaz, Edom and the Negev into the Mediterranean Sea.³⁶² Between these two regions lies *Arabia Deserta*, a mostly deserted central plateau. As for the region's religious practices, Zidan states that most of the Arabian tribes in Palmyra, Petra, Hatra and Mecca were polytheist communities; Kindites and some tribes of Medina practiced Judaism; while the Ghassanids and Lakhmids adopted Christianity.³⁶³ After the coming of Islam, many of these regions gradually submitted themselves to the 'new' religion, suggesting that the expansion of the Islamic realm did not only reinforce its ideological and political power over the region but also redefined the meaning of Arab-ness, whose perspectival focus has now been shifted towards the once neglected region of *Arabia Deserta*.³⁶⁴

5.2.3 The Ancient Trade Route and Pre-Islamic Seasonal Sūqs

Unlike their ancient counterparts in Europe (sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2), there are currently few archaeological clues that can tell of the nature of a Pre-Islamic Arab Sūq (section 5.3). Yet, the poetry of Pre-Islamic Arabia (section 5.4) and the historical documents of medieval Islam, like those of al-Kalbi and Ibn Khaldun, offer some insights on the development and activities of Pre-Islamic seasonal Sūqs, particularly those inaugurated near or around *Mecca* (section 5.5).³⁶⁵ Here, the idea of pilgrimage, or *Hajj*, seems to be an indispensable companion of Pre-Islamic trade, acting as a protective shield against the once intricate and complex, "network of tribal vendettas and blood feuds incurred from earlier collisions."³⁶⁶ In this regard, Peters explains that the incorporation of

³⁶¹ Zidan, *Al arab kabl al-Islam*, 87.

³⁶² Ibid., 86-87.

³⁶³ Ibid., 245.

³⁶⁴ This is also implied from the timeline map illustrated by author p. 146.

³⁶⁵ Abi Munther Hisham bin Muhammed bin Alsaeb al-Kalbi, *Kitab al asnam* (كتاب الأصنام), Arabic, 2nd ed., edited by Ahmed Zaki Pasha (Cairo: Dar Al Kutub al Masriyyah, 1924); Ibn Khaldun, *Al-Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*.

³⁶⁶ F.E. Peters, *The Hajj: The Muslim Pilgrimage to Mecca and the Holy Places* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994), 20. As understood from al-Afghany's book, this sacred period was not always respected, where 'heretic wars' led sometimes to the closing of the markets.

sacred months, or what he refers to as ‘Truce of Gods,’ facilitated dwelling and living-hood among Pre-Islamic Arabian tribes, where major markets, such as *Okaz*, *Majannah*, and *Dhu-Majaz*, were orchestrated through *Hajj* season, which restrained the use of weapons and the shedding of blood (section 5.5).³⁶⁷ For this reason, Hoyland argues that the seasonal *Sūqs* of Arabia were not sought for trading alone but were ritualistic spaces of versatile socio-cultural activities, where truces, coalitions and contractual agreements took place under the sacred mandate of a cease-fire period of four months.³⁶⁸ This possibly led to the proliferation of Pre-Islamic seasonal *Sūqs*, which were considered important anchor points along the ancient trade route. This route is illustrated in Fig. 29 and is described by Zidan as,

*The caravans between Yemen, Phoenicia and Egypt had special routes with specific stops, equipment and guards, facilitating its journey. For, the caravan moves from Hadramawt or Oman towards the north guarded by the Arabs of Qidar, who escort it through al-Dahna’a until it reaches Dadan, then it moves west towards Najd until it reaches Hijaz. From there, the caravans are entrusted to the people of Median, Edom or Nabataea, who escort it to Mecca or Medina and then to Petra via Madaān Saleh. From Petra, the caravan moves north to Phoenicia and Palestine then Tadmur, or it moved west to Egypt.*³⁶⁹

Through Zidan’s above description, it seems that the idea of trade for Pre-Islamic Arabia presented itself as a formula for living-together in spite of tribal feuds, political rivalries and geographic barriers. This explains why seasonal *Sūqs* were not only sought for trading but were also pursued for religious, arbitration, entertainment, sports and cultural purposes (section 5.5).³⁷⁰ Accordingly, it is possible to suggest that the concept of *Sūq*-ness for a Pre-Islamic Arab transcends the limited process of buying and selling goods, making room for a

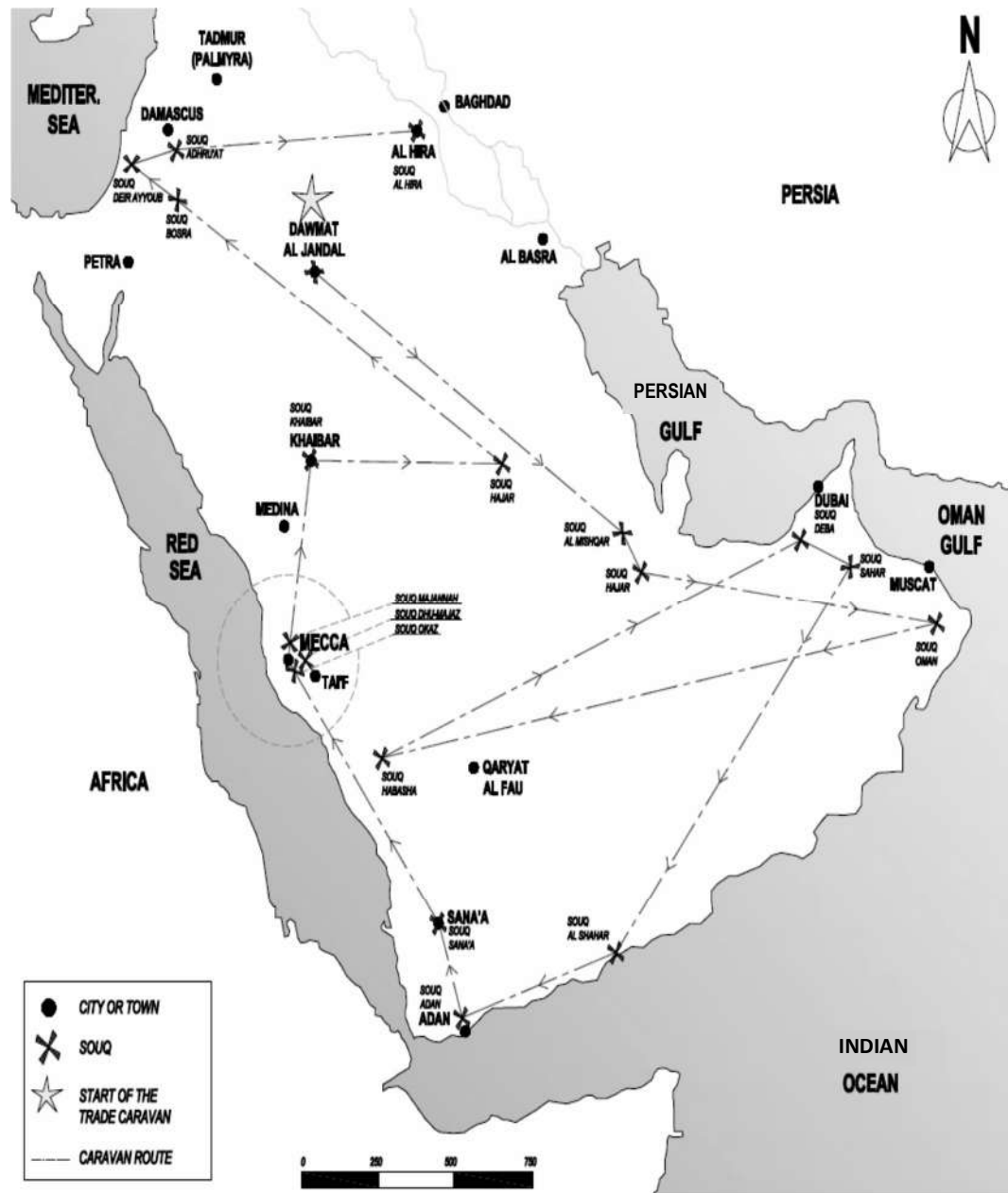
³⁶⁷ Peters, *The Hajj*, 19-20.

³⁶⁸ Ibid., 157-159.

³⁶⁹ Zidan, *Al arab kabl al-Islam*, 161. Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text: كان للقوافل بين اليمن وفينيقية ومصر طرق خاصة فيها مراحل (محطات) ومرافق ومعدات وأقوام من أهل البادية يخفرونها. فالقافلة كانت تنتقل من حضرموت أو عمان وتسير شمالاً يخفروها عرب قيدار فيقطعون بها بادية الدهناء وما بعدها حتى تصل إلى ددان فتعطف غرباً في نجد حتى تأتي الحجاز ومن هناك يستلم خفارتها المديانيون والأدوميون أو الأنباط ويعرجون بها إلى مكة أو يتبعوا المدينة ومنها إلى بطرا عن طريق مدائن صالح. ومن بطرا تسير أما شمالاً إلى فينيقية وفلسطين فتدمر وأما غرباً إلى مصر.

³⁷⁰ Al-Afghany, *Aswaq al-arab*, 289.

Figure 29 - List of Pre-Islamic Sūqs along the ancient route, starting from Dawmat al-Jandal (marked with a star on the map). Map by author after Saeed al-Afghany's cited book, p. 229. The caravan route passed through the following order: 1. Dawmat al-Jandal, 2. Sūq al Mashriq, 3. Sūq Hajar (هجر), 4. Sūq Oman, 5. Sūq Habasha, 6. Sūq Sahar, 7. Sūq Dubai (Deba), 8. Sūq al-Shahar, 9. Sūq Adan, 10. Sūq Sana'a, 11. Sūq Okaz, 12. Sūq Dhu Majaz, 13. Sūq Majannah, 14. Sūq Khaibar, 15. Sūq Hajar (حجر), 16. Sūq Deir Ayyoub, 17. Sūq Adhurai'at, 18. Sūq al-Hira.



variety of symbolic associations related to one's ability to situate him/herself within the inner circles of home/tribe, to carefully participate with the outside 'circles' of others, to demarcate the vast stretches of Arabia's desert and to engage actively with its extending trade route. These relationships seem to have also been regulated by a larger set of moral codes, religious dictations and tribal rules, as understood from the different poetic descriptions of the era, some of which will be discussed in section 5.4. Since, the ancient trade route appears as a vital

communication channel in this respect, examining some urban settlements that lie along its path would assist in better understanding the social, cultural and urban strategies espoused by different Pre-Islamic Arab tribes. By doing so, it would also be possible to identify some shared themes that conceptualized the idea of Sūq-ness for a Pre-Islamic Arab.

5.3 Pre-Islamic Arabian Settlements: An Archaeological Overview

The following case studies examine the development of some urban settlements along the ancient trade route, highlighting the different urban and architectural practices of its socio-cultural groups.

5.3.1 *Arabia Felix*: Saba (9th BC – 275AD)

In Pre-Islamic towns, like Petra, Palmyra, Hatra and Saba, scientists revealed a wide range of archaeological artefacts that have been excavated, examined and catalogued—with varying degrees of success due to contemporary political events. Opening with Saba, the archaeological activities, which started in the mid-20th century by the ‘American Foundation for the Study of Man’ that was headed by Wendell Philips, discovered a sophisticated urban settlement in the capital city of Mârib.³⁷¹ According to Frank P. Albright, one of the excavation team members, the most important remnants there are the legendary Dam of Mârib and its adjacent temple complex. The temple was dedicated to the worship of the moon god ‘*Ilumquh*’ and comprised of several areas that include “a peristyle hall with one large door leading into the temple and a large triple door leading out to an outer court and building complex terminated in a row of eight large pillars.”³⁷² There are many architectural fragments on site, such as bronze flooring and marble water conduits that once led water in four directions (north to south and east to west) before setting into a large bronze tray, bringing to mind the later Islamic application of heavenly rivers. There are also some perforated niche windows placed on high levels, the purpose of which is to allow air and

³⁷¹ Frank P. Albright, "The Excavation of the Temple of the Moon at Mârib (Yemen)," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*, no. 128 (1952): 25-38.

³⁷² Albright, "The Excavation of the Temple of the Moon at Mârib (Yemen)," 28.

light circulation with minimal external intrusion. Yet, the most forceful architectural elements on site are the eight monolithic stone pillars that remained for millennia as the complex's only visible part. Albright states that there is no evidence regarding the function of these high pillars, or their relationship to the way in or out of the temple. However, he believes that they could have either been conceived as freestanding pillars or as carriers of another structure, given the protrusions above.³⁷³ The excavation of nearby sites reveals the presence of similar pillars, which once bore bronze plaques with inscriptions, probably dedicated to the moon God. Several statues of bulls—symbol of the moon god—and ram heads were also found on site and on decorative friezes. Aside from simple pottery, the 1952 expedition team unearthed several relics that are believed to be emblematic of the region's tradition and rituals. These include bronze inscription plaques, bull-head waterspouts and tablelike altars, and a 39cm bronze statue dating to the 7th or 8th century BC.³⁷⁴

Despite the mysteries surrounding the temples of Southern Arabia, these archaeological remnants suggest the presence of an active socio-urban centre that was conceived after a particular worldview. This is supported by Strabo's aforementioned account (section 5.2), which hints that the relationship between people, gods and sovereigns at Saba exceeds the primitive need for survival, pointing to a sophisticated socio-cultural context that is aware of the different roles that religion, politics and economy play in people's daily lived experience. On the one hand, the half-covered pillars stood for millennia, as a sign of the sand-buried city. On the other hand, the bronze man statue recounts silently the characteristics of an essentially Sabaean lifestyle, with its rigid expression resembling the artistic conventions of Ancient Egypt and early Greek sculptures. This statue further suggests that there could have been some form of encounter between these cultures, either through trade, military conquest or travel. Jawad Ali believes that such cultural exchange took place as a result of the different trading activities between Saba and the Mediterranean cities of Egypt and

³⁷³ Albright, "The Excavation of the Temple of the Moon at Mârib (Yemen)," 34.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 38.



Figure 31 – Left, Stone Pillars in Mârib. Right, Bronze Statue of the 39cm man, portrayed in Frank Albright's cited article, p. 37.

Greece.³⁷⁵ Such exchange is also implied through the archaeological ruins of other Arabian caravan states, such as Petra, Hatra and *Qaryat al-Fau*. Since the focus here is on markets, it is important to uncover some clues on the nature of trade in ancient Saba. Even though the archaeological remains reveal very little in this regard, the records of Theophrastus (c. 350-287 BC) on the trading activities of the nearby towns of *Shabwa* and *Timna* suggest that Sabaean trade, particularly of frankincense, took place in a temple sanctuary.³⁷⁶ Describing *Shabwa*, Theophrastus states that,

*Frankincense, myrrh, and cassia grow in the Arabian districts of Saba and Adramotitis (Hadramaut)... The land belongs to the Sabeans, who regard the property as sacred... The harvested frankincense was carried to a temple of the sun, the most holy among this nation and guarded by armed Arabians.*³⁷⁷

³⁷⁵ Ali, *Al-mufasssal fî tareekh al-Arab kabl al-Islam* (المفصل في تاريخ العرب قبل الإسلام), 3:163-165.

³⁷⁶ D. P. S. Peacock, A. C. S. Peacock and David Williams, *Food for the Gods: New Light on the Ancient Incense Trade* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2007), Chapter 2.

³⁷⁷ Arnold Hermann Ludwig Heeren, *Historical Researches into the Politics, Intercourse, and Trade of the Principal Nations of Antiquity*, Vol. 1 (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1846), 351.



Figure 32 - *Timna* market stele with inscriptions at four sides. Extracted from Peacock and Williams's cited book, section 2.9.

Yet, at the ancient market town of *Timna*, which according to Pliny (23-79AD) lies around 90 miles from Mârib, merchandise brought by caravans were sorted, taxed and displayed in the market, whose centre was adorned with a stele (Fig. 32).³⁷⁸ The four sides of the stele bore inscriptions, explaining the rules of trade in the city. In a way, the stele seems to hold some faint clues relating to the eight monolithic structures of the temple at Mârib, and possibly also suggest some influences on the purpose of the later market-crosses in medieval European towns (section 4.2.3). So, it is possible to assume that there exists a relationship between trade, temple and priests, “who took one-third of the price [as taxes] for the deity,” to quote Theophrastus.³⁷⁹ To test the development of this idea in different regions of Pre-Islamic Arabia, the following section will examine the example of Petra.

³⁷⁸ Peacock and Williams, *Food for the Gods: New Light on the Ancient Incense Trade*, Chapter 2, section 2.9.

³⁷⁹ Heeren, *Historical Researches into the Politics, Intercourse, and Trade of the Principal Nations of Antiquity*, 1:351.

5.3.2 *Arabia Petraea: Petra (c. 4th BC – 2nd AD)*

Petra was the capital of *Nabataea* from 4th century BC and was considered an important Pre-Islamic town and caravan stop. Today, Petra is known for its large stone carved buildings, many of which have been preserved by virtue of their natural setting despite the effects of erosion and the earthquake that hit the area during the 4th century AD.³⁸⁰ Aside from its famous Treasury, excavations done by Brown University in 1996 confirm the presence of a large urban settlement in the area known as The Great Temple Complex, which includes a sanctuary to the ancient gods of Petra, a theatre, residential quarters, traces of an industrial sector, a bath complex, multiple cisterns and a complex network of colonnades /terraces.³⁸¹ The area is situated on a deserted plain encircled by lavishly carved sandstone mountains. It is approached through a tight canyon path, known as the *Siq*, which opens to large plaza overlooking the Treasury. The archaeological reports seem to confirm that the whole complex is built on a large network of water channels that allows the collection of rain/underground **water** and **its** distribution to different sectors of the city. The excavation reports also suggest that the area near the temple housed a series of water pools and gardens that owe their existence to the genius that these early Arabs possessed in the fields of hydraulic engineering, turning Petra into ‘Las Vegas’ of the ancient Middle East.³⁸² This proposition possibly explains Strabo’s earlier descriptions of the now- deserted area and re-questions some current allegations regarding Nabataean architecture being little beyond a clever merger between Greek, Roman and Mesopotamian styles. For, Strabo’s account describes Petra as a thriving cultural centre, a pilgrimage hub and a tolerant trading town that hosts various socio-cultural groups, many of which enjoy prolonged visits at Petra during their journey on the ancient trading route.³⁸³ Such diversity and tolerance are echoed in

³⁸⁰ K.A. Berney et al., *International Dictionary of Historic Places: Middle East and Africa*, vol. 4 (Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 1996), 4:580.

³⁸¹ Adam Brin, “Brown University Petra: The Great Temple Excavations,” Brown University (April 20, 1999), https://www.brown.edu/Departments/Joukowsky_Institute/Petra/ (accessed February 12, 2017).

³⁸² Brin, “Brown University Petra: The Great Temple Excavations.”

³⁸³ Strabo, *The Geography of Strabo*, Book XVI, iv.21.

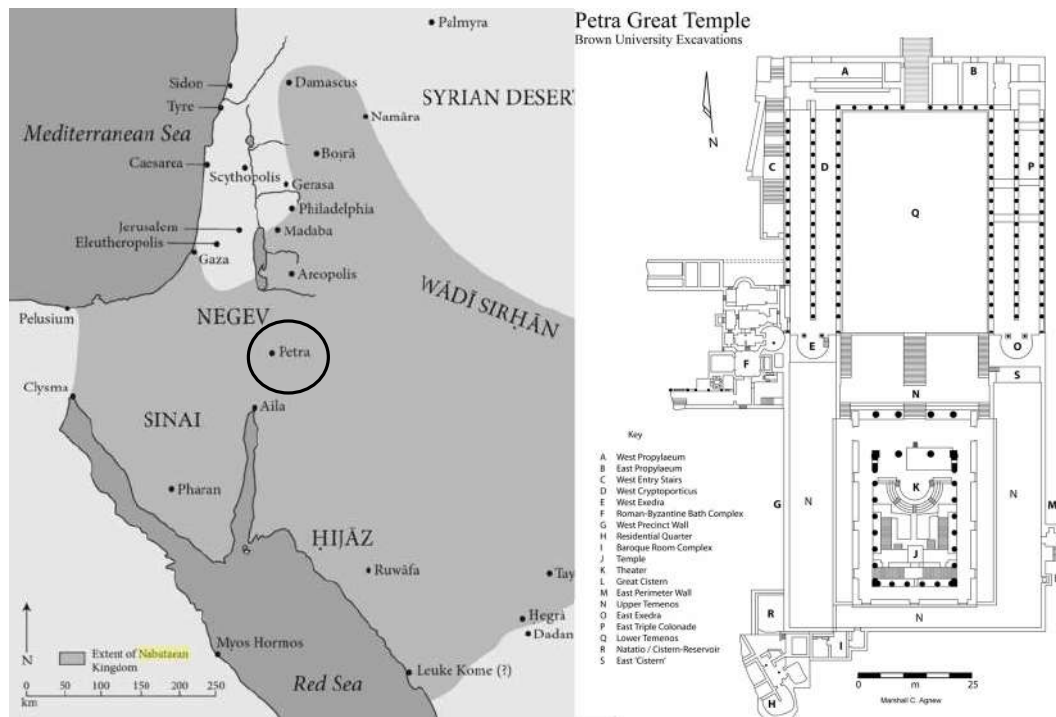


Figure 33 – Left, The Nabataean Kingdom, map extracted from Greg Fisher's book *Arabs and Empires before Islam*, p. 374. Right, Plan of Petra's Great Temple.

Petra's eclectic architectural features and decorative motifs, like the caravan sculpture at the entrance of the *Siq*, the Ziggurat decorations on top of Nabataean tombs, the miniature Egyptian obelisks scattered throughout the valley and the Greco-Roman features adorning the entry to the Treasury. The pictures in the following page depict many such features, including the elephant capital head, which was found on the site of the Great Temple by the Brown University team. These elephant heads, which belong to a series of column capitals that use animal motifs, geometric compositions and Corinthian leaves as decorative elements, accentuate Petra's cultural diversity and possibly too its relationship with some Buddhist trading partners or its practice of elephant worship, similar to that of the bull or the ram in ancient Saba.

Another important archaeological finding in Petra is a mysterious site known as 'The High Altar of Sacrifice,' a circular structure carved on a mountainous hill that was accessible through a deviation from the main trade route. The role of this structure and its significance is unknown, yet many believe that Nabataeans were possibly practicing open air sacrifices. This proposition is supported by many symbols that adorn the nearby desert and its mountains,

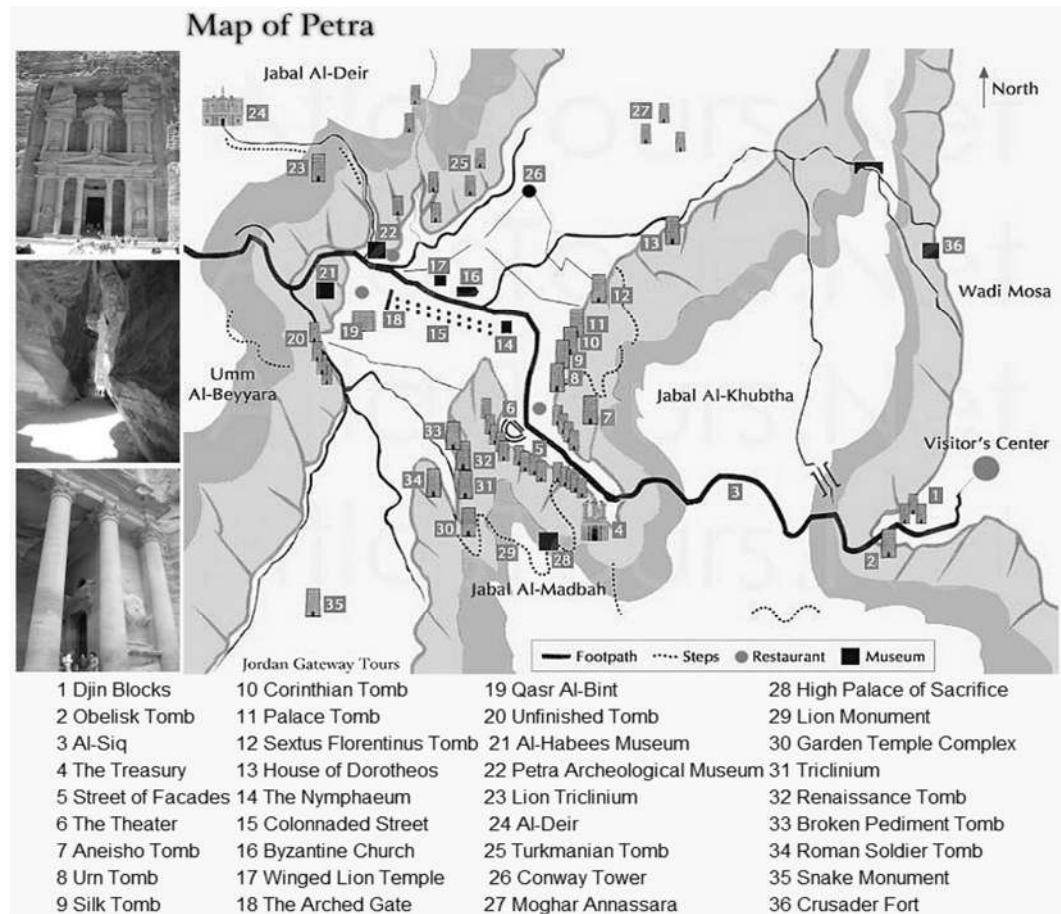


Figure 34 - Map of Petra's site with all existing monuments today.

creating a visual connection between the altar and the main city centre. Jane Taylor describes many such symbols, noting that there exist,

over 20 Djinn blocks scattered around the fringes of Petra. Two of them, standing in the midst of a large necropolis near the South-Western entrance to the city, are overlooked by curious carving known as the Snake Monument. This huge monolith, as old as anything in Petra, is carved in the shape of the lower coils of a giant snake. It is easy to miss – remarkably so, given its size and prominence on its high square cut base – but in the Nabataean past, when it spiralled upwards to its original multicoiled height, it must have dominated the landscape.³⁸⁴

Taylor's above description suggests that Nabataean culture was not a simplistic nomadic organization and that its people, similar to other Eastern cultures, created sophisticated narratives that guided their spiritual, social and cultural life. For, it

³⁸⁴ Jane Taylor, *Petra and the Lost Kingdom of the Nabataeans* (London: I.B. Taurus & Co. Ltd., 2002), 82.



Figure 35 –Petra's architectural remnants.

has been established through variable sources, such as those of Alpass, Zidan and Ali, that social configurations in Nabataea included nomadic, semi-nomadic and sedentary groups, whose belief systems have been as diverse as their social organizations, with many Nabataean tribes practicing pagan rituals, while others adopting Judaism or Christianity.³⁸⁵ The development of religious rituals in Petra was possibly a direct result of the city's position as a trading hub, which promulgated different forms of cultural exchange between Petra, the trading caravans crossing the city and the Roman troops/delegations in the region (section 5.2). This exchange culminated in a diverse religious network that was tolerant to multiple ritualistic activities, suggesting that Petra was not an isolated city for the dead, as believed by some early 20th century researchers, but was an important pilgrimage destination on the ancient trade route.

³⁸⁵ Peter Alpass, *The Religious Life of Nabataea* (Boston: Brill, 2013), 6; Zidan, *Al arab kabl al-Islam*, 245; Ali, *Al-mufasssal fi tareekh al-Arab kabl al-Islam*, 1:380-385.

Figure 36 - Sculpture of a trading caravan at the entrance of Petra's canyon path, showing the lower parts of a man and the hoofs of two camels. The sculpture is carved in the mountain, as a post or sign of the city.



So, it could be argued that mythological beliefs, some of which are physically represented on Petra's mountains and others imaginatively described through poetry (section 5.5.2), played the greatest role in unifying these religious groups into a tightly knit cultural phenomenon that shared its world with supernatural powers, spirits (*Djinn* and angles) and desert monsters. In this light, the High Sacrifice Altar, Snake monuments and *Djinn* blocks present themselves as symbols in a larger cosmic dialogue between Pre-Islamic Arabs, other earth dwellers and the sky. In this light, the caravan route, its merchandise, animals and overall ritualistic activities offer a highly contrasting image to the one currently propagated about Pre-Islamic Arabian history, suggesting that despite an apparent influence exerted by Greco-Roman, Assyrian, or Sassanid exchanges, Pre-Islamic Arabian culture was *sui generis*, having been shaped by its own geo-political context as much as by the trading activities along the ancient trade route. Even though the relationship between trade and religion is suggested through Petra's trading path, sculptural reliefs and poetic heritage (section 5.5.2), there exists little archaeological evidence on the location or physical structure of the market. In this regard, Taylor explains that,



Figure 37 -
Archaeological map of
Mampis (Kurnub).
Extracted from cited
UNESCO report p. 86.
Market position framed in
red.

*on a terrace immediately to the east of the Theatre building—known since the early surveys of Petra as the Lower Market—there is another remarkable feature. While doubts maybe entertained as to whether the Great Temple was indeed a temple, there now seems no doubt at all that the Lower Market was not a market.*³⁸⁶

Taylor also claims that recent research found that the so-called Lower Market building housed pools and gardens. Yet, examining another Nabataeans' site in the Negev region can be informative due to the Nabataeans' consistent urban planning models in most of their towns.³⁸⁷ According to the UNESCO report, the market of *Mampsis (Kurnub)*, for instance, is built in close proximity to both the city centre and to the Eastern Church.³⁸⁸ This area, referred to as Building IV in the report, was built during the Middle Nabataean period (1st BC – 1st AD) and consists of two streets with three rows of shops on its northern side. On the southern side lies an Eastern Church that was probably built during the later Byzantine period over the city's original citadel.³⁸⁹ The functional aspect of this

³⁸⁶ Taylor, *Petra and the Lost Kingdom of the Nabataeans*, 111.

³⁸⁷ Ibid.

³⁸⁸ UNESCO, "The Incense Route - Desert Cities in the Negev" (15th July 2005), <http://whc.unesco.org/uploads/nominations/1107rev.pdf> (accessed November 14th, 2019).

³⁸⁹ UNESCO, "The Incense Route - Desert Cities in the Negev," 89-91.

layout (Fig. 37), which divides the city into residential, religious, administrative, commercial and military quarters attests to the organised nature of these settlements, where the market took a central position in the overall city plan and comprised not of a single street but of a network of paths and roads that connect a city's market quarter with the larger trade route.

5.3.3 *Arabia Petraea: Hatra, or al-Hadar (c. 2nd BC - 241 AD)*

The Arabic term *al-Hadar* (الحضر) refers to an urbanized town as opposed to a rural settlement. While the city's known history is often defined after its Parthian period, many historical references suggest that,

Hatra was the Jazirah's main city, probably the 'Arabaya' of the local royal inscriptions, ruled by an independent dynasty whose rulers proclaimed themselves 'kings of the Arabs.' The presence at the city's centre of a large and opulent sanctuary (450x300 m) indicates how Hatra's development was mostly due to its role of religious centre dedicated to Shamash, the Sun God, worshipped by Arab tribes.³⁹⁰

This city is a fine example of fortified urban centres, with two circular walls surrounding its 2km diametric length, housing more than 160 surveillance towers and four access gates.³⁹¹ The uniqueness of Hatra's example lies in its distinctive planning strategy, where a circular centre is traversed by two crossing routes, showing clear Parthian and Hellenistic influences. Similar to Saba, the heart of the city is crowned by the main temple complex, while its periphery is dedicated to mausolea and royal palaces. According to the excavation report of the *Centro Ricerche Archeologiche e Scavi di Torino*, Hatra symbolized the seat of political cum religious power of Arabia during the 2nd century AD. Its urban planning strategies portray a functional approach, with clear residential, commercial and administrative divisions. Contemporaneous historical accounts also suggest the military potency of Hatra, as noted in Cassius Dio's *Roman History* LXXVI,

³⁹⁰ Roberta Venco Ricciardi, "Iraq – Hatra," *Centro Ricerche Archeologiche e Scavi di Torino per il Medio Oriente e l'Asia* (1998), <http://www.centroscavitorino.it/eng/index.php/projects/iraq/hatra> (accessed December 14, 2017).

³⁹¹ Lucinda Dirven, "Aspects of Hatrene Religion: A Note on the Statues of Kings and Nobles from Hatra," in *The Variety of Local Religious Life in the Near East*, edited by Ted Kaizer (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 209-247.

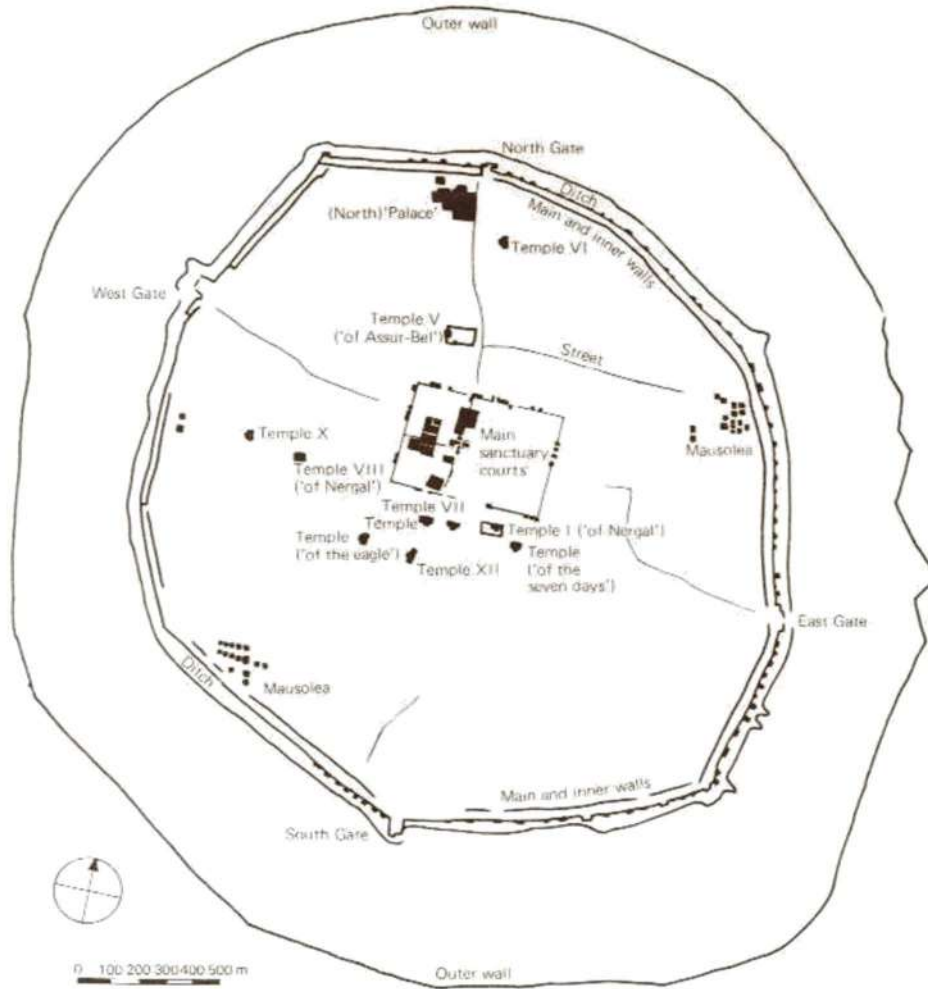


Figure 38 - Plan of Hatra showing the main plan, temple complex, and gates.

when describing Septimius Severus's (145-211AD) attack on Hatra,

...He [Severus] himself made another expedition against Hatra... When a portion of the outer circuit [fortification wall] had fallen in one place and all the soldiers were eager to force their way inside the remainder, Severus checked them from doing so by ordering the signal for retreat to be clearly sounded on every side. For the place enjoyed great fame, containing as it did a vast number of offering to the Sun-god as well as vast sums of money; and he expected the Arabians to come to terms voluntarily, in order to avoid being forcibly captured and enslaved.³⁹²

³⁹² Cassius Dio, *Roman History: Book LXXVI*, translated by Earnest Cary (Leob Classical Library Edition, IX Volumes, 1927), 223-225. The book is now part of the public domain and is published online http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Cassius_Dio/76*.html

According to the 1995 UNESCO report, the city of Hatra presents a prime example of Parthian, Roman and Arab fusion.³⁹³ The report also claims that,

In the heart of this round city of almost 2 km diameter, a rectangular temenos lies in an east-west direction. It is surrounded by a stone wall interrupted by towers. A north-south wall divides it into two unequal spaces. The function of this temenos -where there is a heavier concentration of temples in the west space seems to have been both religious and commercial: shops looking onto a pilastered portico have been found on each of the four sides of the rectangle.³⁹⁴

This description is also noted in Ricciardi's archaeological report, which states that the excavation team located an important residential building (Building A) to the north of the main temple complex near a thoroughfare street that connects the temenos to the North gate. The team believes that this specific area of town, "seems to possess a composite appearance and several functions: commercial, residential and religious, in accordance with the city's distinctive Arab character."³⁹⁵ For this reason, it is possible to assume that Building A is a representative of Arabian wealthy residences of the time, and hence its structure can provide some access to understanding Pre-Islamic Arabian domestic life in general. The team's report offers extensive descriptions of the building, affirming the presence of a central courtyard that houses an *iwan* and an altar for a two-winged god, a large formal hall with hunting scene murals, a covered portico and small daily rooms dedicated for cooking and weaving.

In light of these descriptions and the different discussions presented through the case studies of Saba and Petra (section 5.3.1 and 5.3.2), it seems that religion and trade were perceived as an integral duality in the life of Pre-Islamic Arabia. This is possibly due to the inseparability of local markets and the caravan journeys along the ancient trade route, whose rituals included trade and

³⁹³ UNESCO, "International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMS) – World Heritage List N° 277 Rev.," (6th September 1985) <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/277/documents/> (accessed 14th Nov. 2019)

³⁹⁴ UNESCO, "International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMS) – World Heritage List N° 277 Rev.," 2.

³⁹⁵ Ricciardi, "Iraq – Hatra."



Figure 39 - Hatra's archaeological artefacts. Left, mural of Goddess *Alilat* seated on her throne watching the God of the underworld with his hound. Middle, statue of female royalty with stylistic head cover and hand gesture. Right, wall relief of camels.

pilgrimage too. This religious outlook, which is found in the artefacts of Petra and Saba, is likewise apparent in the architecture of Hatra, where God *Shamash* (sun) prevails over a multi-national consortium of deities, such as the Arabian goddess *Al-lat*, the Roman god Hercules and the Greek goddess Nike. This multiplicity is conveyed through architectural reliefs and statues, like the ones portrayed above, which depict venerated desert animals, particularly camels, God heads, especially that of the city's patron deity *Shamash*, as well as many religious stories, one of which portrays *Al-Lat* seated on her throne watching in approval the God of the Netherworld holding his hounds. Studying some of these statues, it is intriguing to see that Hatrene women seem to have possessed an elevated social state, as suggested through the ancient Arabic inscriptions that adorn the base of one of the statues (Fig. 40), which is believed to belong to a Hatrene priestess,

*(September 238 CE). The statue of Qaimi daughter of Abdsimia, the wine-seller, wife of Neshraqab, the scribe of the Bar-Maren (the Son of our Lord), which 'Isharbel the Virgin' has ordered her (to make). And she herself has erected it for the life of herself and for the life of Neshraqab, her husband, and Absa, her brother, and for the life of all personnel of Bar-Maren, both inside and outside, and whoever is dear to them, all of them.*³⁹⁶

³⁹⁶ Lucinda Dirven, "Aspects of Hatrene Religion," 219.



Figure 40 - Hatra's statues:
Priestess Qaimi (left),
King Sanatruq II (Centre),
and God Pazuzu (Right).

Aside from stylistic appearance, like stereotypical hand gestures, postures, clothing, jewellery and head covers, Hatrene artefacts uncover many aspects of Hatra's everyday objects, practices and beliefs, including musical instrument (lutes and tambourines), entertainment (dancing and alcohol), death (poisoning and murder), ethics (love, justice and punishment) and myths (venerated animals and winged devils). These artefacts put into question some current Islamic prejudices that propagate the 'ignorant' character of Pre-Islamic Arabia.

5.3.4 *Arabia Deserta: Qaryat al-Fau (c. 1st – 4th AD)*

While most of the previously discussed examples offer little with regards to the modes of exchange between different Pre-Islamic Arabian settlements, it is still possible to suggest that Petra and Hatra share comparable architectural expressions that mediate between the Western-Eastern perspectives of the time, pointing again to a constant cultural exchange between the Arabs and

Romans/Persians by virtue of their geographic location, trading activities and/or military coalitions. This can be further explored using the archaeological discoveries of *Qaryat al-Fau* (in Saudi Arabia), the capital of the Kindites from 1st to the 4th century AD, the study of which was conducted by Abdul Rahman al-Ansary around 1980.³⁹⁷ As explained in Al-Ansary's excavation report, the archaeological ruins of *Qaryat al-Fau* provide substantial evidence of an organized settlement comprising of a palace, residential clusters, tombs, a large market and a temple. Similar to Hatra, the organization of the architectural elements in *Qaryat al-Fau* suggests a developed urban system, which revolved around three major life aspects: the religious, the political and the social. The archaeological objects, which comprise of architectural remnants, metal works, wall inscriptions, paintings, pottery and silver coins forged in the town, also challenge many of the previously discussed prejudices of this era and hint at the possibility that many later Islamic urban layouts were adaptations of these Pre-Islamic configurations. This proposition is supported by Al-Ansary's report, where he describes the market structure of *Qaryat al-Fau* as,

The market was constructed near the western edge of the valley which separates the Tuwaiq escarpment from the limits of the town, and to the east of the residential sector. It has a length of 30.25 meters from east to west, and 25.20 meters from north to south. It is surrounded with a massive wall consisting of three successive adjoining walls, the middle one being of limestone, and the inner and outer ones, of mud brick... On entering the market, we found ourselves in a courtyard with shops lined with shops on the northern and southern sides, and a single shop on both the eastern and western sides. The facades of these shops were stone-built, and their doors are wide with a semi-circular lintel... One set of shops is separated from the others by corridors leading to stores in the rear, as well as to an entrance with a yard where a flight of stairs leads to the upper floors which were used as storerooms... the market has two storeys and is topped by the roof. It appears that cubicles were built on the outer edge of the roof. It seems that these cubicles were used as lavatories.³⁹⁸

³⁹⁷ A. R. al-Ansary, *Qaryat al-Fau: A Portrait of Pre-Islamic Civilization in Saudi Arabia* (Riyadh: Department of Archaeology and Museology in the University of Riyadh, 1980).

³⁹⁸ Al-Ansary, *Qaryat al-Fau*, 17-18.



Figure 41 - Aerial view of the archaeological remnants of *Qaryat al-Fau*, as provided in al-Ansary's cited book, p.31.

The layout of the market, as described above, portrays many Roman influences in terms of spatial divisions, as discussed through the example of Trajan's forum (section 4.2.2). For, the roofed market of *Qaryat al-Fau* is positioned near the fortified city wall, which acted as a protective shield penetrated by controlled gateways, ensuring the safety of trading caravans and sold merchandise while keeping trading activities away from residential clusters. It also comprises of a courtyard, stairs and corridors that separate the shops from storerooms and probably the offices. This administrative sector acted as a buffer zone, regulating the relationship between the city's political, social and commercial life. Even though the site's current state reveals little about *Kindah*'s architectural style, fragments of wall paintings and daily objects, which have been unearthed from *Qaryat al-Fau*, are very informative. The wall painting portrayed in Fig. 43 depicts a multi-storey building at *Kindah*, where the market, situated on the ground floor, is half covered by a balcony-like structure that is adjacent to what seems to be a shower enclosure, or the lavatory room as proposed by al-Ansari's above quote. The presence of the shower, with clearly drawn water drops falling off a naked man/woman, attests to the presence of a water system,



Figure 42 – Left, Altars from *Qaryat al-Fau*, displayed at the Pergamon Museum of Islamic Art, Berlin (March 2012). Right, Limestone Incense Burner from *Qaryat al-Fau*.

probably similar in its conception to that of Petra. The levels above are perforated by a series of windows from which people, the gender of which is again unidentifiable, are looking onto the market activities. This wall painting is of special importance because it provides some clues regarding the relationship between Arabian urban strategies before and after the coming of Islam. On the one hand, the building shows some affinity to the earlier structures of Saba through their multi-levels, perforated windows, stone-covered bases and roof indentations. On the other hand, the structure also reaches to the medieval structures of Islamic Arabia, presenting themselves as possible precedents to the *mashrabeya* balconies, lattice windows and *hammams*. Similarly, the artefacts of *Qaryat al-Fau*, such as the altar pillars and the incense burner displayed at the Pergamon Museum of Islamic Art in Berlin, tell of a distinct artistic style that is based on pure geometric forms, showing evident connections to Sabaeen as well as Islamic art and architecture.³⁹⁹ The concluding notes of Al-Ansary's report also suggest that the first Islamic town, constructed by prophet Mohammed (PBUH) in

³⁹⁹ The pillars were displayed as part of Saudi's Islamic heritage, from 26th January to the March 2012.



Figure 43 - Wall Painting
Fragment from *Qaryat al-
Fau*.

Medina, had its roots in a genuinely Arabian heritage, since the model he built adopted a similar architectural, administrative and commercial logic to that of *Qaryat al-Fau*.⁴⁰⁰ While al-Ansary's suggestion is probably correct, it could be argued that such affinity is also traceable in most of the previously discussed examples, where the temple and Sūqs seem to symbolize a continuous thread of safety nodes along the ancient trade route.

5.3.5 *Arabia Desertae: Mecca and Medina (c. 6th – 7thAD)*

Since Mecca and Medina represent the earliest patterns of Islamic urbanism, an overview of their physical development can reveal the different modes of Arabian socio-urban dynamics right before the rise of Islam. Like *al-Hadar*, the term '*Medina*' (مدينة) denotes an urbanized town with several rural subsidiaries surrounding its walled core. Most of our current knowledge of Medina is based on Islamic sources, yet one of its non-Islamic Arabic readings during the early 20th century is attributed to the works of Jewish scholar Israel Wilvenson. Even though Wilvenson's work is mainly concerned with the history of Jews in the lands of Arabia, his few insights on the urban layout of Medina, its forts and markets shed light on some important Pre-Islamic Arabian lived experiences that possibly shaped the Hejaz region at the dawn of Islamic revelations. Here, Wilvenson tells of a coexistence between Judaism and paganism in Medina, where both have been practiced within the frameworks of a larger Arabian culture. He notes that Medina was famous for its agricultural and industrial activities that have been developed by Arab Jews, who introduced new types of flora and irrigation techniques to the area and mastered fishing, herding, forging and weaving.⁴⁰¹ Unlike Mecca's open settlement, Medina's urban plan was based on a fortified centre that was surrounded by small raised forts called '*Attam*.' Like Mecca, Medina's main roads that crossed perpendicularly at its centre linked the city to the main trade route and to the major Sūqs positioned around its vicinities.

⁴⁰⁰ Al-Ansary, *Qaryat al-Fau*, 22.

⁴⁰¹ Israel Wilvenson, *Tareekh al-yahood fi bilad al-arab fil jahiliyyati wa sadr al-Islam* (تاريخ اليهود في بلاد العرب في الجاهلية وصدر الإسلام), Arabic (Cairo: Lajnat al-Taāleef, 1914), 17-18.

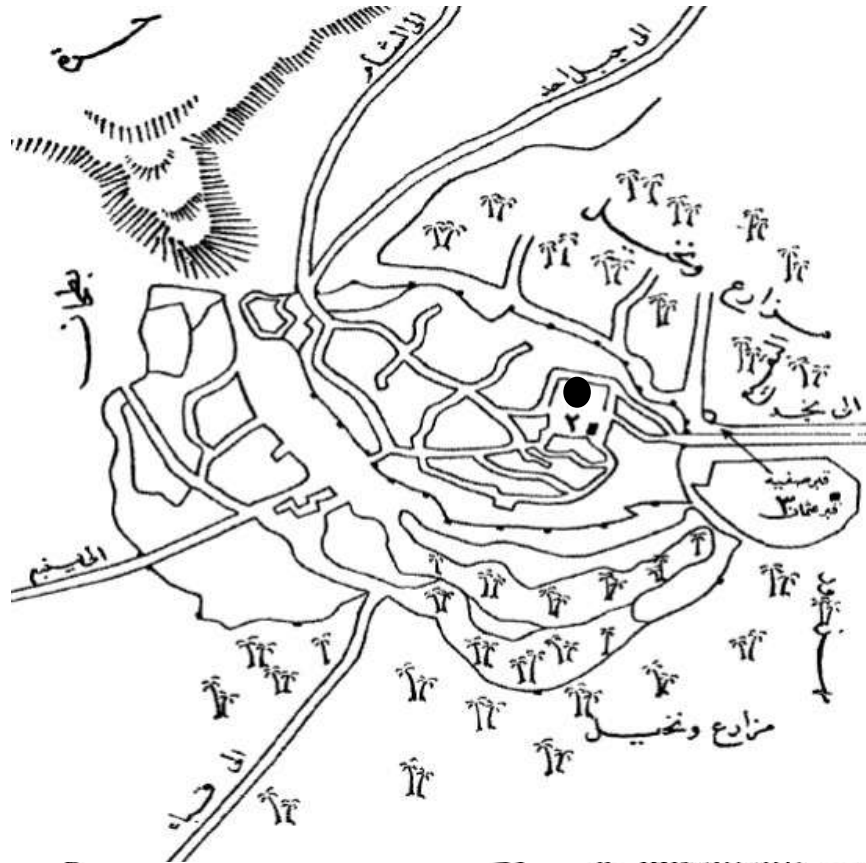


Figure 44 - Plan of Medina during prophet Mohammed's (PBHU) time around 7th century AD. Extracted from Israel Wilvenson's book, p. 1. The shaded circle denotes the place of the Mosque.

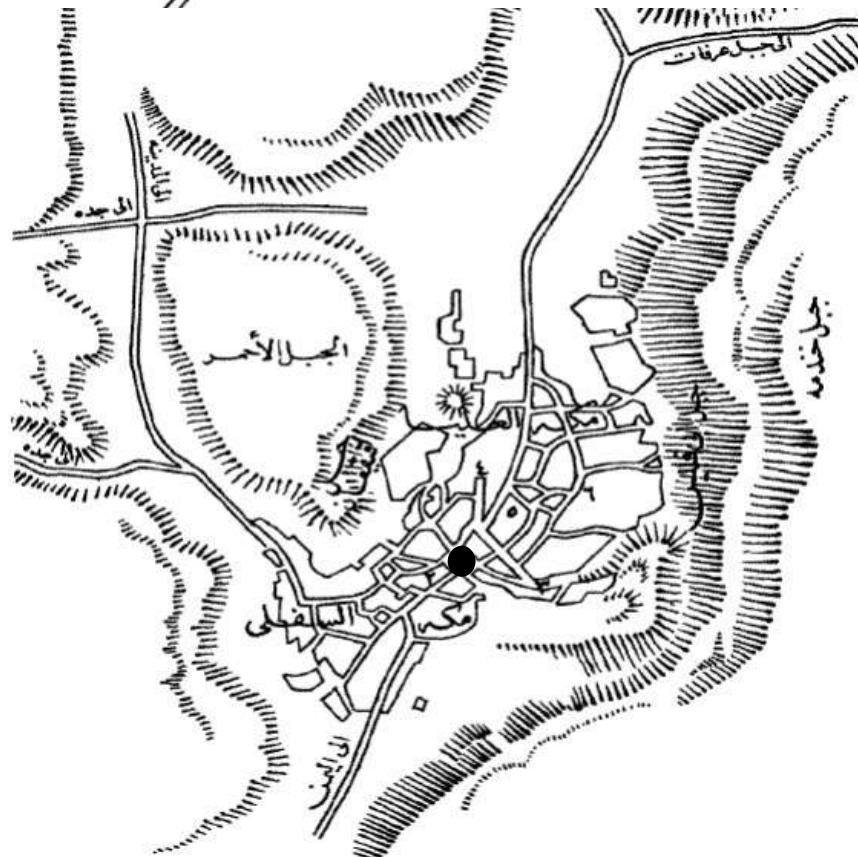


Figure 45 - Plan of Mecca during prophet Mohammed's (PBHU) time around 7th century AD. Extracted from Israel Wilvenson's book, p. 96. The shaded circle denotes the place of the *Kaaba*.

Since most of Medina's trade was controlled by the Arabian Jews, the Sūqs of Medina were initially positioned near the Jewish forts, which served the dual purpose of protection and storage.⁴⁰² Many of these forts housed synagogues, schools and libraries, reflecting the wealth and status of the Jewish family owning them.⁴⁰³ Accordingly, Wilvenson argues that Medina's socio-urban experience was divided between the main city centre, whose closely built districts were politically autonomous yet economically dependent on those of the forts, and the *Attam*, whose Jewish gated communities were often engaged in armed conflicts with other Arabian tribes, including the later Muslims of Medina.

5.4 Language: Being-in-Arabic between the Desert and the Trade Route

The previous section discussed different examples of Pre-Islamic Arabian settlements in terms of their urban typologies and architectural motifs. These case studies suggest that the region's social and well as cultural development was as diverse as the geographic expanse it covered. They also suggest that Pre-Islamic Arabia was not only a trading hub but also a stage of cultural exchange and political conflicts. This is understood from the various fortification strategies and decorative motifs, which reflect the different cultural influences that shaped the region's aesthetic expressions, ranging from high levels of foreign permeation in Hatra and Petra for instance, to what seems as limited cultural exposures in both Mecca and Medina. While these different modes of cultural exchange are possibly attributed to these towns' geographic proximity to the Roman/Persian empires, their direct connection to the trade route and the presence of Arabia's central desert as a natural boundary, many scholars, such as Shawky Dayf and Anwar Chejne, believe that Pre-Islamic Arabian heritage has been transmitted and preserved through language, particularly poetry.⁴⁰⁴

⁴⁰² Wilvenson, *Tareekh al-yahood fi bilad al-arab fil jahiliyyati wa sadr al-Islam*, 116.

⁴⁰³ Ibid., 118

⁴⁰⁴ Shawky Dayf, *Tareekh al-adab al-'Arabi: Al-'asr al-jahili* (تاريخ الأدب العربي: العصر الجاهلي), Arabic, 11th ed. (Cairo: Dar al-Ma'aref, 1960), 81; Anwar G. Chejne, *The Arabic Language: Its Role in History* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1969), 20. Dayf's book title could be translated as *The History of Arabic Literature: The Jahili (Pre-Islamic) Era*.

As previously discussed, Pre-Islamic Arab-ness is defined in relation to language, desert and the trade route (section 5.2). These structures seem to have played a big role in Pre-Islamic Arabian experience, delineating an Arab's everyday participation in space. The bulk of Pre-Islamic poetry that we currently possess suggests this, owing to the consistency characterising its overall composition and linguistic development in different regions, as noted by Dayf.⁴⁰⁵ Accordingly, the importance of Pre-Islamic poetry here rests on two important observations. The first is the embeddedness of a Pre-Islamic Arab poet in the region's daily events, allowing the research to identify some of the mostly reciprocated meanings that seem to have shaped the Pre-Islamic lifeworld. Second is the employment of a unified form of Classic Arabic in almost all of the Pre-Islamic poetic references we have today, despite the poets' variable regional origin, possibly dialects too.⁴⁰⁶ This can be best traced through the ten most celebrated Pre-Islamic poems known as '*al-Mu'alakat*,' almost all of which start by lamenting over the remnants of a deserted site called '*al-atlal*,' followed by verses describing the poet's journey and his camel or horse, before proceeding to the main subject of the poem, which is often dedicated to praising the poet's tribe's deeds, values, chivalry, manliness, generosity and wisdom.⁴⁰⁷ This distinct order provides an indispensable access to Pre-Islamic Arabia's lifeworld and its binding *ethos*, informing us as, Zuhayr ibn Abi Solmah's (520-609 AD) following verses do, that repetition is one of the mostly recognizable aspects of Pre-Islamic poetry. In this regard, he states,

*I don't see our sayings except borrowings... or repetitions
extracted from previous expressions.*⁴⁰⁸

The limited set of topics of Pre-Islamic poetry suggests this 'repetition' or convention too, given that they generally revolve around seven categories: praise, disdain, description, eulogy, encouragement, apology and allegory.⁴⁰⁹ These

⁴⁰⁵ Dayf, *Tareekh al-adab al-'Arabi*, 183-184.

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid., 131.

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid., 195-220.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid., 226. Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text:
ما أَرَانَا نَقُولُ إِلَّا مَعَاراً... أَوْ مَعَاداً مِنْ لَفْظِنَا مَكْرُوراً

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid., 195-196.

categories offer some insights into the different social concerns of a Pre-Islamic Arab. The issues of eloquence and linguistic purity seem to be other important concerns of the era too, as noted in the medieval works of al-Jahedh (776-886) and al-Asfahani (897-967) for instance.⁴¹⁰ This is reflected in Arabic language's sixteen different poetic meters or '*bohour*, 'which were deployed according to the chief emotional intent of the poem (call for war, revenge, love, pride, disdain, satire, apology), thus creating different social, political or economic responses. The following table summarizes these poetic meters, as described by Arabic historian al-Khalil ibn Ahmed al-Farahidi (718 – 786), who was the first to classify their rhythmic and grammatical characteristics—*wazn* and '*arudh*—and the most prominent uses of each type, hence outlining the relationship between the sensory reception of Arabic poetry and its linguistic composition.⁴¹¹

To examine this last proposition in relation to the subject of the *Sūq*, the following will focus on some of the mostly reciprocated poetic examples of Pre-Islamic Arabia. While the rituals of Pre-Islamic *Sūqs* will be explored in section 5.6, it is important to note here that Pre-Islamic poetry depended on oral recitation during seasonal *Sūqs*, where winning a poetry battle seemed to be a heraldic accomplishment not only for the poet but also for his whole tribe, as suggested by al-Afghany.⁴¹² For this reason, the Pre-Islamic poet presents an important reference for this era, since he was considered the official voice of his tribe and its hero in peace as well as in war, “influencing the life of the people, moulding their minds, and giving immediacy to an ideal of Arab virtues ... manliness, valour, generosity, courage and honour.”⁴¹³ This idea is reflected in Imro'o al-Qays's (died c. 500) following descriptions of his horse in battlefield,

⁴¹⁰ Al-Jahedh, *Kitab al-bayan wa-t-tabyin* (كتاب البيان والتبيين), edited by Abdulsalam Haroun (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khanji, 1948); Al-Asfahani, *Kitab al-Alghany* (كتاب الأغاني), Arabic (Cairo: Dar al-Kutub al-Masriyyah, 1936).

⁴¹¹ The studies and references examined here refer to the laws of Arabic prosody as established by al-Farahidi in his 8th century book titled *Kitab al-'Arudh* (كتاب العروض).

⁴¹² Al-Afghany, *Aswaq al arab*, 281-282.

⁴¹³ Chejne, *The Arabic Language: Its Role in History*, 6.

Bahr Name	Origin of Nomenclature	Poetic Meter	Rhythm
<i>al-Saree'a</i>	It refers to the fast paced pronunciation of its parts	مستعلن مستعلن فاعلن	XXU- XXU- -U-
<i>al-Khafeef</i>	It refers to the lightness of its vowels and movements	فاعلتن مستعلن فاعلتن	XU- X-U- XU-
<i>al-Mutadarek</i>	Similar to al-Mutakareb	فاعلن فاعلن فاعلن	S- S- S-
<i>al-Rajz</i>	It refers to the instability of the meter, similar to the camel's shaky legs	مستعلن مستعلن مستعلن	X-U- X-U- X-U-
<i>al-Basseet</i>	It refers to the simplicity of the composition in both parts and conjunctions	مستعلن فاعلن مستعلن فاعلن	X-U- XU- X-U- UU-
<i>al-Taweel</i>	It refers to the long and complete parts of the verse comprising of 48 letters.	فعلون مفاعيلن فعلون مفاعيلن	U-X U-X- U-X U-U-
<i>al-Wafer</i>	It refers to its abundance in movement	مفاعلتن مفاعلتن فعلون	U-O- U-O- U--
<i>al-Mutakareb</i>	It refers to the closeness of its parts and their shortness	فعلون فعلون فعلون فعلون	U-X U-X U-X U-
<i>al-Kamel</i>	It refers to the completeness of its parts comprising of 30 letters	مفاعلتن مفاعلتن مفاعلتن	O-U- O-U- O-U-
<i>al-Munsareh</i>	It refers to its easiness in pronunciation and recitation	مستعلن مفعولات مستعلن	X-U- -X-U- -UU-
<i>al-Mujtath</i>	It refers to it being extracted from an original Bahr al-Khafeef	مستعلن فاعلتن	X-U- XU-
<i>al-Muktadeb</i>	It refers to its shortness as being extracted from an original Bahr al-Munsareh	مفعولات مستعلن	XU- U- UU-
<i>al-Ramal</i>	It refers to its fast recitation, which is similar to an act jogging	فاعلتن فاعلتن فاعلتن	XU- XU- XU-
<i>al-Hajz</i>	It refers to the verses smooth quality, which makes them fit to become songs	مفاعيلن مفاعيلن	U--X U--X
<i>al-Mudare'a</i>	It refers to its similarity to Bahr al-Khafeef	مفاعيلن فاعلتن	U-X X-U --
<i>al-Madid</i>	It refers to the expansion of its parts, and it is similar to	فاعلتن فاعلن فاعلتن	XU- XU- XU-
(-) Long part (u) Short part (x) 1 Long or 1 Short part (o) 1 Long or 2 Short parts (S) 1 Long, or 2 Shorts, or 1 Long + 1 Short part			

Figure 46 - Arabic Poetic Meters in relation to sensory reception. By author after Dayf's discussions in his cited book.

Attacking, fleeing, advancing, retreating all at once ... as a bolder of rocks flying from a stream high above. ⁴¹⁴

The **intricate** descriptions presented here suggest that the importance of this verse transcends the masterful play of language, manifesting itself in the extensive details offered in a single verse of 48 letters (*Bahr Taweel*), through which the poet draws expressive pictures that are full of movement, sounds and emotions. For, the fast-short syllabi used in the first half of the verse (*Mi-Ka-Rrin/Mi-Fa-*

⁴¹⁴ Imro'o al-Qays, "قفا نيك من ذكرى حبيب ومنزل", in *Kitab al-Alghany* (كتاب الأغاني), by Abu Faraj Al-Asfahani (Cairo: Dar al-Kutub al-Masriyyah, 1936), 9:69-70. Al-Qays was not only a Pre-Islamic poet, but also a king and celebrated warrior of the kingdom of *Kindah*. Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

مكر مفر مقبل مدبر معا ... كجلمود صخر حطه السيل من علي

Rrin/Muk-Bi-Lin/Mud-Bi-Rin/Ma- 'An) have a strong auditory quality similar in its reception to the beats of war drums, while the fast-flowing contradictory words mimic the violence of movement. The second half of the verse complements the first by drawing yet another auditory and moving image of a stone avalanche that falls fiercely on the ground. Aside from poetic imagery, the verse suggests the poet's complete immersion in his world, allowing language to become a transparent medium through which he recounts his own experience. Many would only rely on the value of the verse as evidence of the poet's linguistic mastery or '*balagha 'h*,' ignoring the important clues provided in his description of the horse advancing and retreating at the same time—an acute observation that **was only possible to make after the invention of the camera** (Fig. 47).⁴¹⁵

Aside from the above verses, which fall under the praise and description categories, there are ample other examples that can tell of the inextricable relationship between Pre-Islamic Arabs and their environment, like the following verses of al-Khansaā (575 – 645AD)—renowned female poet—that tell,

*O' my eyes be generous and do not freeze ... Will you not cry over
Sakhr [her brother] the sweet?* ⁴¹⁶

Al-Khansaā's eulogies, most of which were dedicated to the loss of her brothers, were and still are considered the epitome of this poetic genre. The above verse deploys multiple linguistic imageries according to *Bahr Kamel*, which is a meter abundant in vowels (movement or حركات) and thus makes room for variable emotional expressions. Again, the descriptions presented through the verse show a strong relationship to natural phenomena, like water, coldness and morning dew, which were scarce yet highly cherished. Another example of such relationship is traced through the development of the poetic meter called *Bahr al-Rajz*, which is considered the lightest on the ears, the most inconsistent and the least formal in its composition, leading many scholars to consider it as the basis for medieval folk

⁴¹⁵ Brian Clegg, *The Man Who Stopped Time: The Illuminating Story of Eadweard Muybridge – Pioneer Photographer, Father of the Motion Picture, Murderer* (Washington: Joseph Henry Press, 2007), 55-56.

⁴¹⁶ Al-Khansaā, "اعيني جودا ولا تجمدا," in *Kitab al-Alghany (كتاب الأغاني)*, by Abu Faraj Al-Asfahani (Cairo: Dar al-Kutub al-Masriyyah, 1936), 15:75.

اعيني جودا ولا تجمدا ... ألا تبيكان لصخر الندى

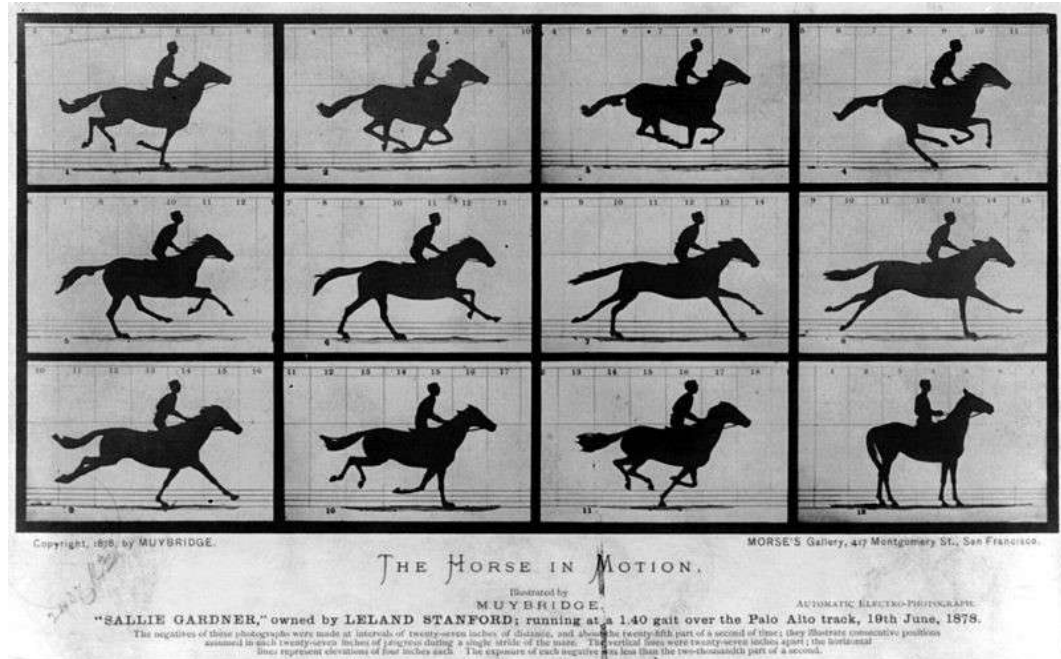


Figure 47 - Eadweard Muybridge's Photographic analysis of *The Horse in Motion* (1878).

stories and chanted *Arabian Epics*.⁴¹⁷ The original meaning of the Arabic word ‘*rajz*’ denotes such inconsistency, referring to a disease that attacks the upper thighs of camels, resulting in perpetual shivering that is intercepted by short periods of stability.⁴¹⁸ Even though *Bahr al-Rajz* was rarely considered a testament of poetic mastery, its easiness made it fit for all ages, relaying wisdom from generation to generation and delivering news from one region to the other. Examples of this meter are found in many of al-Nabigha al-Dhubyani’s (535-604 AD) proverbial poetry, whose **value extends** beyond the particularity of specific situations towards a universal form of practical wisdom, like,

*Man wishes to live, and long life might harm him ... His smile
perishes, and after life’s sweetness what remains is its hardship*⁴¹⁹

⁴¹⁷ Mohammed Tawfiq Al-Bakry Al-Siddiqy, *Arajeez al Arab* (أراجيز العرب), Arabic (Cairo: Maktabat al-Thakafah al-Diniyah, 1895), 3.

⁴¹⁸ Dayf, *Tareekh al-adab al-‘Arabi*, 185-186.

⁴¹⁹ Al-Nabigha al-Dhubyani, “أمال,” in *Diwan al-Nabigha al-Dhubyani* (ديوان النابغة الذبياني), Arabic 3rd ed., edited by Abbas Abdul Sater (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyah, 1996), 122.

المرء يأمل أن يعيش ... وطول عيش قد يضره
تفنى بشأسته ويبقى ... بعد حلو العيش مره

5.4.1 The Desert in Pre-Islamic Poetry

The above examples suggest that Pre-Islamic Arabia is an oral culture that constructs its understanding of the world through a poetic symbiosis between daily lived experience and language. This proposition could be illustrated through the more than forty different synonyms for the term ‘desert,’ which were used in Pre-Islamic poetry to reflect its variable experiences in relation to:

1. Topographic characteristics. Synonyms include: *al-bathna*, *al-barriyah*, *al-jadjad*, *al-khafqah*, *al-sabsab*, *al-sahmaj*, *al-saharaā*, *al-fadfad*. A poetic example here is al-Dhubyani’s verses,
*An army that fills the void ... turning hills into flat deserts*⁴²⁰
2. The presence (or not) of water, animal or plant life. Synonyms include: *al-balga’a*, *al-tanoufah*, *al-tayma’a*, *al-sardah*, *al-darra’a*, *al-kono’a*, *al-falat*, *al-yahmaā*. A poetic example of this situation can be found in A’antara bin Shaddad’s verses,
*She cried, so I said a frightened deer ... who has been harmed in the uninhabited desert [al-falat]*⁴²¹
3. The method and result of crossing. Synonyms include: *al-baydaā*, *al-tayha’a*, *al-dawwo*, *al-dawm*, *al-mafaza*, *al-muhlika*. A poetic example of this category is Imro’o al-Qays’s description of his journey,
*A desert [dawwo] that one cannot be guided through its darkness ... neither by known traces nor by a shimmering star.*⁴²²

This abundance of synonymy extends to other objects/experiences that were directly related to the desert, like the moon, camel and horse. This is best

⁴²⁰ Al-Dhubyani, “أرأيت يوم عكاظ,” in *Diwan al-Nabigha al-Dhubyani* (ديوان النابغة الذبياني), Arabic 3rd ed., edited by Abbas Abdul Sater (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyah, 1996), 88. Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

جمع يظل به الفضاء معضلا ... يدع الأكام كأنهن صحاري

⁴²¹ A’antara bin Shaddad, “رمت الفؤاد مليحة عذراء,” in *Sharh diwan A’antara* (شرح ديوان عنترة), by al-Khatib al-Tabrizi, edited by Majid Trad, 21-22 (Beirut: Dar al-Kitab al-Arabi, 1992), 21. Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

ورنت فقلت غزالة مذعورة ... قد راعها وسط الفلاة بلاء

⁴²² Imro’o al-Qays, “خليلي مرّ بي على أم جندب,” in *Diwan Imro’o al-Qays* (ديوان امرؤ القيس), Arabic 5th ed., edited by Mustafa Abdul Shafi, 29-38 (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyah, 2004), 31. Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

ودوية لا يهتدي لفلاتها ... يعرفان أعلام ولا ضوء كوكب

portrayed in all of the ten *Mu'alakat*, which dedicate substantial sections to describe the poets' camel or '*naqa*,' as exemplified in the following verses by Tarafa ibn al-'Abd (6th century AD),

*[This camel] has thighs full of flesh as if they were the doors of a glistening castle... [Its bones] like a Roman arch whose lord swore to perfectly build by glazed stone.*⁴²³

Even though many similar prideful descriptions are found in the works of al-Qays and 'Antara, as in this latter's saying that his camel's strength and grandness resemble a fortified palace, many historians consider Tarafa's above verses among the most powerful.⁴²⁴ Aside from linguistic mastery, the power of these verses relate directly to their ability to recount some specific spatial experiences that were understood and reciprocated by Pre-Islamic Arabs, who were not only aware of the physical form of a palace, its doors and grand fortifications but also of the intricate materials and techniques used to accomplish its building, including glazed stone, glasswork and fire-treated paint. This sheds light on the different types of urban experiences that affected the Arabian understanding of space, whose references have been translated through variable aesthetic activities, as understood from archaeological ruins, architectural reliefs and poetic imagery.

5.4.2 The Trade Route in Pre-Islamic Poetry

Having looked at the effects of the desert's experience on the Arabs' poetic expressions, it is now important to investigate the role of the trade route in shaping the Pre-Islamic Arabs' understanding of togetherness. Again, Pre-Islamic poetry suggests the simultaneous experience of desert and trade route, forming together the nexus of Arabia's lifeworld. This explains why the sight of ruins and the path of the journey were imperative constituents of Pre-Islamic poetry, including those dedicated to describing love stories. The following verses by

⁴²³ Tarafa ibn al-'Abd, "لِخَوْلَةٍ أَطْلَالَ بِرُقَّةٍ نُهْمَدُ," in *Diwan Tarafa ibn al-'Abd* (ديوان طرفة بن العبد), Arabic 3rd ed., edited by Mahdi Mohamed Nasser Eldien (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 2002), 21. Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

لها فخذان أكمل النحض فيهما كأنهما بابا منيف ممر... كقنطرة الرومي أقسم ربها لتكتنفن حتى تشاد بقرمد

⁴²⁴ Dayf, *Tareekh al-Adab al-'Arabi: Al-'asr al-jahili*, 214.

Imro'o al-Qays epitomize this genre, describing specific spatial references that trace, rather vividly, his lover's travelling path,

*Stop friends! Let us weep the memory of my beloved and her
deserted house ... at the edge of the road between Dakhoul [place]
then Hawmali [place] ... then Towidaha [place] then al-Mikrat
[place], the traces are still there ... have not been erased by South
nor North winds ...*⁴²⁵

This is also found in Tarafa bin al-'Abd's verses that lament his lover's departure,

*Khawla [name of his beloved] left ruins on the mottled rock plains
of Thahmad [a known desert location for Pre-Islamic Arabs] ...
that appear like the trace of a tattoo on the back of a hand.*⁴²⁶

In this light, the ancient trade route emerges not only as a symbol of trade alone, but also as a gatherer of various experiences, memories and motives, including love, travel, pilgrimage, leisure, robbery (التصعلك) and seeking refuge. This is validated through poetry again, like Amro bin Kulthoum's (526-584AD) verses, which describe his lover's leisurely travels between different Arabian towns,

*A glass [of wine] that you drank in Ba'albak [a town in Lebanon]
... and another in Damascus without sharing.*⁴²⁷

and in the poetry of 'Orwa ibn al-Ward (555-607AD), an illustrious Arabian mugger, who attacked trading caravans to distribute its products among the poor. Many of his poems describe the moral obligation of the mugger towards his tribe, especially its needy women, like his saying,

*He helps [the mugger] the women of his tribe anytime they ask him
to ... until he feels like an exhausted beast.*⁴²⁸

⁴²⁵ Imro'o al-Qays, "قفّا نيك من ذكرى حبيب ومنزل", in *Kitab al-Alghany* (كتاب الأغاني), by Abu Faraj Al-Asfahani (Cairo: Dar al-Kutub al-Masriyyah, 1936), 9:69-70. Original Arabic text:

قفّا نيك من ذكرى حبيب ومنزل ... يسقط اللوى بين الدخول فحو مل
ثوضح فالمرأة لم يغف رسمها ... لما نسجتها من جنوب وشمال

⁴²⁶ Tarafa ibn al-'Abd, "لخولة أطلال ببرقة نهد", 19. Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

لخولة أطلال ببرقة نهد ... تلوح كباقي الوشم في ظاهر اليد

⁴²⁷ Mohammed Badr-Eldien Al-Halabi, *Nehayat al-irab min sharh mua'alakat al-'arab* (الرب نهاية), Arabic (Cairo: Matba'at al-Sa'ada, 1906), 133. Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

وكأس قد شربت ببعلبك ... وأخرى في دمشق وقاصرين

⁴²⁸ 'Orwa ibn Al-Ward, "يا بنت منذر", in *Diwan 'Orwa ibn Al-Ward* (ديوان عروة بن الورد), Arabic, edited by Asmaa Abu Bakir Mohamed (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 1998). Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

يُعينُ نساءَ الحيّ ما يستعنه ... فيضجني طليحاً كالبعير المحسر

The biography of many Pre-Islamic poets also suggests that many of them travelled along the trade route for purposes of praising Arabian kings and rulers, hence accruing political, social and financial gains. This can be seen in the works of al-A'sha (died c. 625) and al-Dhubyani for instance. The following verses were composed by this latter, praising al-Nu'man ibn al-Munthir (died c. 608), Lakhmid king of al-Hira,

I do not see anyone similar to him [al-Nu'man's] and in this I exclude no one... Except for Solomon who was ordered by God to guide people away from wrongdoing... and to enslave Djinns in order to build Tadmur [Palmyra] with stones and columns.⁴²⁹

5.5 Lived Experience: Sūq-ness as a Mode of being-in-the-world

Section 5.2.3 discussed the importance of seasonal Sūqs in consolidating the Pre-Islamic sense of being-an-Arab among other Arabs. It also pointed to the seemingly indispensable relationship between the rituals of *Hajj* and the trading caravans' ordained movement along the ancient trade route. The case studies (sections 5.3.1-5.3.3) also seem to support such idea, given some archaeological clues and historical records that suggest a close relationship between Pre-Islamic temples and marketplaces, a practice that seems to be essentially Arabian if compared to the discussed examples of ancient Greek, Roman or medieval marketplaces in Europe (sections 4.2.1-4.2.3). The following sections will look further into this relationship, studying the particular rituals of Pre-Islamic Meccan *Hajj*, the different Sūqs established near it, their activities and the poetic expressions composed around them.

⁴²⁹ Al-Dhubyani, “يا دار مية,” in *Diwan al-Nabigha al-Dhubyani* (ديوان النابغة الذبياني), Arabic 3rd ed., edited by Abbas Abdul Sater (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyah, 1996), 12-13. Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

ولا أرى فاعلاً في النَّاسِ يُشَبِّهُهُ ... ولا أحاشي من الأقوام من أحد
إلا سليمان إذ قال الإله له ... قُمْ في البرية فاحذوها عن القنيد
وخيس الجن إني قد أذنت لهم ... يَبْلُغُونَ ثَمَرَ الصُّقَّاحِ وَالْعَمَدِ

5.5.1 Rituals of Pre-Islamic Arabian Sūqs

The rituals of Meccan *Hajj* in Pre-Islamic Arabia started a month prior to the sacred month of *Dhu-al-Hajja*.⁴³⁰ Al-Alussi describes the rituals stating that on the first day of *Dhu-al-Ka'ada* (Arabian lunar month), the Arabs then proceed to *Sūq Okaz*, where they stay for twenty nights trading in their markets strictly following the banners of their respective leaders and remaining within their specified housing premises if they are not trading in the middle of the *Sūq*.⁴³¹ After the first twenty days, the groups proceed closer to Mecca to inaugurate their second *Sūq of Majannah*, which lasts for ten days. On the first day of *Hajj*, the groups proceed to Mount *Arafat*, where they establish their final *Sūq of Dhu-al-Majaz* that lasts for eight nights, after which the caravans start the ritual of *Tarwiya*, or collecting water for the journey to *Arafat* and *Muzdalifa*.⁴³²

The most notable seasonal market established then was that of *Sūq Okaz*, which took place over fifteen to twenty consecutive days during the month of *Dhu al-Ka'ada*, as noted by Arfan Mohammed Hammour and Mokhless and Wahbi Hariri-Refai.⁴³³ According to contemporary historians Hariri-Refai, *Sūq Okaz* was a central commercial hub in Mecca, and its legacy lasted for over 200 years from 542 AD until 756 AD. *Okaz* was established as an international network of religious, cultural and commercial activities, which were all safeguarded by the sacred rituals of *Hajj*.⁴³⁴ Al-Afghany further notes that *Okaz's* most renowned activities included poetry duels, which later became the most notable cultural achievements of Arabia's Pre-Islamic era. Many attribute the name of the *Sūq* itself to its illustrious poetry 'battles,' since the original meaning of the Arabic word '*akaza*' translates loosely as someone who has conquered another by

⁴³⁰ Mahmoud Shukry al-Alussi, *Bulugh al-irab fi ma' refat ahwal al-arab* (بلوغ الإرب في معرفة أحوال العرب), Arabic 2nd ed. (Cairo: The National Library, 1896), 1:264-265.

⁴³¹ Al-Alussi, *Bulugh al-irab fi ma' refat ahwal al-arab*, 1:243-248.

⁴³² Abu al-Walid Muhammad ibn Abdullah ibn Ahmed al-Azraqi, *Akhbar Mecca wama jaa fiha min athar* (أخبار مكة وما جاء فيها من آثار), Arabic, edited by Abdul Malek bin Abdullah bin Duhaish (Makkah: Dar Al Thaqafah li-l Tiba'ah, 2003), 280.

⁴³³ Arfan Mohammed Hammour, *Al mawassem wal hessab al zaman 'ind al Arab kabl al Islam* (المواسم وحساب الزمن عند العرب قبل الإسلام), Arabic (Beirut: Al Rihab Modern Institution Press, 2000), 104.

⁴³⁴ Al-Afghany, *Aswaq al arab*, 281-282.

piercing his pride through wisdom, self-praise or disdain.⁴³⁵ This definition is validated by some contemporary studies, which argue that,

*Okaz was particularly renowned as a forum for poetry reading and verse duels between competing poets. It played a crucial role in upgrading the linguistic skills of the tribes, unifying Arabic grammar and syntax, and establishing generally accepted modes of expression in poetry and oral discourse.*⁴³⁶

and through specific events that were recounted in the course of Pre-Islamic poetry, such as the duel between Omayya bin Khalaf al-Khuza'i (died c. 624) and Hassan that took place in the *Sūq of Okaz*, when the latter stated,

*I heard from Omayya some false allegations [about Hassan] ... and he is not honest in his records ... I will broadcast the truth everywhere and in all the great assemblies of Okaz.*⁴³⁷

In addition to poetry, al-Afghany tells of the multiple functions of the ancient market, which aside from its primary task of facilitating the trade of silk, oils, raisins, weapons, leather, spices and many foreign products, played a major role in settling inter-tribal disputes, passing of judiciary laws, propagating major social issues concerning marriage, slavery and illnesses, forging of economic and political alliances, preaching on religious and ethical values, and conducting sporting events, such as wrestling. Al-Afghany also claims that *Okaz* was the stage for prophet Muhammed's (PBUH) public announcement of Islam because of the *Sūq*'s ability to congregate thousands of people from disparate backgrounds and vicinities, as noted in Abu Thuayb's following verse,

*When the tents are put up at Okaz ... trading starts, and thousands congregate.*⁴³⁸

In a way, the grand seasonal markets, most of which were tied to the rituals of *Hajj*, transformed Mecca's holy *Kaaba* into a prime destination, hence presenting itself as Pre-Islamic Arabia's primal image of protection and its "origin

⁴³⁵ Al-Afghany, *Aswaq al-arab*, 289.

⁴³⁶ Hariri-Refai, *The Heritage of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*, 253.

⁴³⁷ Al-Afghany, *Aswaq al arab*, 240. Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

اتاني عن امية زور قول ... وما هو بالمغيب بذي حفاظ
سأشهر ما حييت لهم كلاما ... ينشر بالمجامع من عكاظ

⁴³⁸ Ibid., 339. Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

إذ بني القباب على عكاظ ... وقام البيع واجتمع الألو ف

of confidence in the world.”⁴³⁹ This is inferred from the constant reference to this holy spot with the Arabic word ‘*al-bayt*,’ or home. Presenting itself as the dwelling place for the God(s), the rituals accompanying the experience of the *Kaaba* and its nearby *Sūqs* possibly played an important role in defining the meaning of dwelling for a Pre-Islamic Arab. As suggested through Abu-Talib ibn Abdul Muttalib’s (died c. 619) following verses, the mental image of the *Kaaba* summoned the totality of *Hajj* rituals and its aspired spiritual/purifying experience, hence activating a connection to the sky and its supreme deity,

*I pray for protection to the God of people from all harm that might be inflicted upon us... and to the House in the heart of Mecca and to Allah who is the all-knowing ... and to the Black Stone that they touch and reside next to from dawn to dusk ... and Abraham’s footprint on the muddy rocks where he stood barefoot ... and the running sprees between Safa and Marwa ... for all those who came to Hajj to visit God’s House whether riding or walking ... performing all its sacred rituals...*⁴⁴⁰

This spiritual attachment to *al-Kaaba* made *Quraish* tribe enforce many protocols on the trading activities that orchestrated the *Hajj* rituals. This is suggested in al-Dhubyani’s following verses, which describe one of his journeys in the market of *Dhu-Majaz* and his reluctance to succumb to mundane pleasures,

*She said I see you travelling partner refusing courtship, know that old age will not spare you ... [He said] May Wadd [Pre-Islamic God] bless you, it is not appropriate for us to pursue pleasure when religion[Hajj] is calling upon us ... We are persisting to go through its hardship seeking God’s favours and blessings.*⁴⁴¹

⁴³⁹ Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, 103.

⁴⁴⁰ Abu Talib, “خليلي ما أدني لأول عاذل,” in *Diwan Abi Taleb* (ديوان أبي طالب عم النبي ص), Arabic, edited by Mohamed al-Tounji (Beirut: Dar al-Kitab al-‘Arabi, 1994), 64-65. Translation by author. The verses describe the rituals of Hajj during Pre-Islamic Arabia. Original Arabic text:

أعوذ برب الناس من كل طاعن... علينا بسوء أو ملخ باطل
وبالبيت حق البيت من بطن مكة... وبالله إن الله ليس بغافل
وبالحجر الأسود إذ يمسخونه... إذا اكتنفوه بالضحي والأصائل
وموطئ إبراهيم في الصخر رطبه... على قدميه حافياً غير ناعل
وأشواط بين المروتين إلى الصفا... وما فيهما من صورة وتمائل
ومن حج بيت الله من كل راكب... ومن كل ذي نذر ومن كل راجل
وبالمشعر الأقصى والمنازل من منى... وهل فوقها من حرمة ومنازل
وبالجمرة الكبرى إذا صمدوا لها... يؤمون قذفاً رأسها بالجنادل

⁴⁴¹ Al Imam Abu Abdullah al-Hussein bin Ahmed al-Zorouni, *Sharh al-mua’alakat al-’ashr* (شرح (المعلقات العشر), Arabic (Beirut: Dar Maktabat al-Hayyat, 1983), 15-17. Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

Through these readings, it is understood that a Pre-Islamic Arab dwelled poetically within the extent of his/her natural environment, which despite its scarcity allowed the development of an articulate socio-urban discourse, whose meanings have been negotiated and developed through varying symbolic associations. This proposition can be further elucidated through the different mythic belief systems that shaped the Pre-Islamic Arabian lifeworld.

5.5.2 Pre-Islamic Sūq-ness in-between the Visible and the Invisible

The above discussions suggest that there exists an intricate relationship between the desert and the Sūq. This relationship was probably hinged on the Sūq's ability to mediate between people's physical needs, in other words survival, and their identification as Arabs within particular environmental, political and socio-cultural situations. In this way, it seems that the very essence of 'Sūq-ness' is to be understood as a historical situation, turning the desert and the trade route into the most important cultural/spatial references in the Pre-Islamic Arabian lifeworld. This is understood from the previously discussed urban examples, where city walls, gates and roads present themselves as buffer zones that not only filter movement towards the city but also act as extensions of the trade route inside the city's protected shell. Such understanding reinforces the argument that the trade route was not only an economic passageway for transferring goods or for accumulating wealth, but was also a vital path, or a sacred line, that connected different tribes and kingdoms, creating market nodes, burial ground detours and pilgrimage landmarks. In this way, the trade route presents itself as a cultural mirror that reflects the diversity of Pre-Islamic Arabian discourses, some of which were expressed in the form of individual poetic impulses while others were communally translated in the form of mythic beliefs, urban/architectural forms and festive rituals.

As portrayed in the previously discussed urban examples (section 5.4), the Pre-Islamic understanding of light/darkness positions these two concepts on a

قالت أراك أذا رحل وراحلة...تغشى متالف لن ينظر نك الهرما
حياك وُدّ فإنا لا يحلّ لنا... لهو النساء وإن الدين قد عزمنا
مشمريين على خوص مزمنة... نرجو الإله ونرجو البرّ والطعما

parallel sacred scale, making room for the veneration of the Moon God in Saba and Petra and the worship of the Sun gods in Mecca and Hatra. The temples and sacrifice altars of Pre-Islamic Arabia reinforce such understanding too, creating further symbolic associations between man and the sky. In this light, the elevated temple platforms, monolithic pillars, ziggurat forms and sacrifice altars become important clues for understanding the structures and patterns of Pre-Islamic Arabia's mythic lifeworld. Aside from the establishment of religious networks and rituals, the light/darkness duality granted Arabia's diverse religious groups the capacity to share a set of symbolic associations relating to goodness as opposed to evilness, hence allowing Pre-Islamic societies to dwell collectively within a specific set of moral/spiritual obligations.⁴⁴² These symbolic associations also influenced Pre-Islamic Arabia's aesthetic consciousness and its general understanding of the beautiful. For, in this symbolically charged space, where Gods are manifest almost everywhere and through variable significations of lightness, the realm of darkness became a fertile habitat for the unseen and the supernatural. This dark realm allowed the development of a highly imaginative intuition, where darkness did not only denote the invisible but also the everchanging; as opposed to lightness, which refers to the fairness manifest in all that is constant and pure. This explains the Pre-Islamic veneration of cubic/geometric forms, such as those of *al-Ka'ba*, *al-Uzza* and *Dhul-Khuslah*, which symbolize goodness and timelessness, shedding light on the later Islamic pre-occupation with pure forms.

In addition to these spiritual interpretations, Pre-Islamic poetry recounts many supernatural experiences along the ancient trade route, establishing the basis of what was later coined as Arabian mythology. Even though we do not currently possess definite accounts regarding the origin or the development of these myths, the previously discussed archaeological findings point to some recurrent themes that dominated the Arabian collective mind, including desert

⁴⁴² This is portrayed in many of al-Dhubyani's verses, in which he demonstrates a good understanding of Ancient Persian theology, Christianity, the teachings of Abraham, and Arabian mythology.

animals and evil spirits. This is reflected in many Pre-Islamic poems that describe imaginary battles with evil spirits, as recounted by ‘Antara’s following verses,

*The Ghoul in my hands sometimes disappears... then appears
again like a torchlight.*⁴⁴³

or the superstitions related to the sight of specific creatures, as described in al-Dhubyani’s following verses,

*The crow affirmed that our journey starts tomorrow ... so informed
us the large black raven.*⁴⁴⁴

Other poetry examples tell of the Pre-Islamic Arabs’ fear from deserted towns, valleys, wells and even the roots of some trees, where evil spirits were believed to reside.⁴⁴⁵ This fear led to the development of some quasi-ritualistic activities, like “when an Arab arrived in a valley, the first thing he did was to draw a circle and then recite: ‘I seek protection from the master of this valley.’”⁴⁴⁶ The Pre-Islamic obsession with superstitious beliefs is also apparent in their urban development, as discussed through the case studies of Petra and Hatra (sections 5.4.2-5.4.3). Even though this unseen realm was often associated with fear and bad luck, it was also believed to be a source of revelation that granted poets their linguistic genius. This is established through what Pre-Islamic Arabs refer to as *Shaitan el-She’r* or Poetry Devil—equivalent to Greek muses. For, Pre-Islamic Arabs believed that poets were inspired by an accompanying *Shaitan* or devil. They were immersed in this mythic belief to the extent of naming these spirits, such as al-Dhubyani’s

⁴⁴³ Abi Munther Hisham bin Muhammed bin Alsaeb al-Kalbi, *Kitab al asnam* (كتاب الأصنام), Arabic, 2nd ed., edited by Ahmed Zaki Pasha (Cairo: Dar Al Kutub al Masriyyah, 1924), 66. Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

والغول بين يدي يخفي تارة ... ويعود يظهر مثل ضوء المشعل

⁴⁴⁴ Essa Hisham Hassan Salama, “توظيف الموروث في شعر النابغة الذبياني” or “The Application of Heritage in the Poetry of al-Nabigha al Dhubyani” (Master’s thesis, Al-Najjah National University, 2013), 40. Ravens and owls, were considered a source of bad luck to many Pre-Islamic Arabs, believing that their sight meant parting from loved ones. Translation of verses is proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

زعم الغراب بأن رحلتنا غدا ... وبذاك أخبرنا الغداف الأسود

⁴⁴⁵ Amira El-Zein, “The Evolution of the Concept of the Jinn from Pre-Islam to Islam,” (PhD diss., Georgetown University, 1995), 54-57.

⁴⁴⁶ El-Zein, “The Evolution of the Concept of the Jinn from Pre-Islam to Islam,” 58.

devil *Hader* and Imro'o al-Qays's devil *Lafedh bin Lahedh*.⁴⁴⁷ This is again traceable through Pre-Islamic poetry, as expressed in al-A'sha's following verses,

*I did not know how to speak [poetry], yet I believe ... that Misshal
[his devil] composes for me the words I utter.*⁴⁴⁸

The effects of many such mythic beliefs transcend their temporal presence in Pre-Islamic Arabia, extending their shadows over many subsequent cultural products of Islam, including *The Arabian Nights*, which domesticated many of these ancient superstitions. Some of these mythic ideas also affected non-fiction Islamic studies, like the cosmography of 13th century writer al-Qazwini (1203-1283) in his book *Kitab 'Aja'ib al-Makhluqat wa Ghara'ib al-Mawjudat* (Marvels of Things Created and Miraculous Aspects of Things Existing).⁴⁴⁹

5.6 Analysis (01): Pre-Islamic Sūqs in-between *fadaā* and *tareeq*

The above discussions offered in-depth descriptions of the Pre-Islamic Arabian world, using two sets of evidence, archaeological and poetic. These descriptions examined the Pre-Islamic Arabian horizon for its underlying patterns of meaning-making and structures of daily lived experiences. The cross-examination of physical and poetic evidence identified some persistent themes that seem to underpin the Pre-Islamic understanding of being-in-space and being-with-others. The following table outlines these themes and their larger theoretical clusters, which are later mapped on an Idea Network (IN) diagram. This process results in more than one interpretive narrative that can possibly explain the development of the idea of Sūq-ness and its relevance for a Pre-Islamic Arab. The following sections will explain the findings and processes of this thematic analysis, which has been previously described in section 3.5.3.

⁴⁴⁷ Abdulazzak Hemeidah, *Shayateen al-sho'araa: derassa tarikhiyah naqdiyyah muqaranah tasta'een bi 'ilm al-nafs* (شياطين الشعراء: دراسة تاريخية نقدية مقارنة تستعين بعلم النفس), Arabic (Cairo: Maktabat al-Inglo Masriyyah, 1956), 85-92.

⁴⁴⁸ Hemeidah, *Shayateen al-sho'araa*, 87. Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text: وما كنت ذا قول ولكن حسبتني ... إذا مسح لي القول انطق

⁴⁴⁹ Zakariya Ibn Muhammad al-Qazwini, *Kitab 'aja'ib al-makhluqat wa ghara'ib al-mawjudat* (كتاب عجائب المخلوقات وغرائب الموجودات), <https://ceb.nlm.nih.gov/proj/flash/qazwini/qazwini.html> (accessed February 21, 2017).

5.6.1 Thematic Analysis: Initial, Focused and Theoretical Coding

Collected evidence of Pre-Islamic Arabia has been extrapolated in relation to the larger research variables of History – Language – Lived Experience. This resulted in the tables illustrated in Fig. 48-50, which together represent the initial coding stage. First, Pre-Islamic Arabia's historical context table (Fig. 48) compiles the evidences collected from the previously discussed urban case studies and historical records (sections 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4), identifying tribalism, interdependence, diversity, desert, caravan journey, religion, myth and trading among the mostly reciprocated subthemes or Descriptive codes. The initial coding tables of Pre-Islamic Arabia's language and lived experience (Fig. 49-50) support these findings as understood from the different poetic evidences discussed in sections 5.5 and 5.6. Second, the subthemes identified through this initial coding process were cross-examined using the Focused Coding Diagram (Fig. 51), which suggests links between the different sub-themes as understood from this chapter's discussions. In other words, the Focused Coding Diagram (FCD) establishes links between 'what is seen' through architectural fragments or daily experience and 'what is said' through poetry, proposing a set of larger Categorical themes, which were identified depending on the number of links they generated in relation to all of the other sub-themes. These categories are translated as color-codes on the initial coding tables. Third, the color-coded categories are transformed into another table, or the Theoretical Coding table (Fig. 52), which reorganizes all identified sub-themes under the six major Categorical themes of: language, trade route, desert, morality, mythology and urbanism. In order to further translate the relationship between all these themes into coherent narratives, the research makes use of Idea Networking (section 3.5.3), which plots the larger Categorical themes and smaller Descriptive themes as interconnecting nodes, or dialogical clusters of meanings. As shall be explained next, this multi-tiered coding process not only identifies the different themes underpinning the physical development of Pre-Islamic Arabian Sūqs but also proposes different narratives that were constructed around their lived experiences.

Historical Context			
Political/Social/Geographic		Urban/Arch.	
Sub-Themes	Evidence	Sub-Themes	Evidence
Tribalism	Biblical etymology, "Arab" (in Hebrew Arvi) comes both from the desert origin of the Bedouins it originally described (Arava means wilderness). The root 'r-b has several additional meanings in Semitic languages—including "west/sunset," "desert," "mingle," "mixed," "merchant," and "raven"—and are "comprehensible" with all of these having varying degrees of relevance to the emergence of the name. It is also possible that some forms were metathetical from 'B-R "moving around" (Arabic 'B-R "traverse"), and hence, it is alleged, "nomadic."	Monolithic Structures / Geometric Forms	Saba - Petra, Hatra and Mecca (sections 5.4.1 - 5.4.2, 5.4.3 and 5.4.5)
Interdependence and Tribal Coalitions	When two men would swear a friendship, they stand on each side of a third: he with a sharp stone makes a cut on the inside of the hand of each near the middle finger, and, taking a piece from their dress, dips it in the blood of each, and moistens therewith seven stones lying in the midst, calling the while on Bacchus and Urania	Gods / Idols / Superstitions	Petra - over 20 Djinn blocks scattered around the fringes of Petra. Two of them, standing in the midst of a large necropolis near the South-Western entrance to the city, are overlooked by curious carving known as the Snake Monument. This huge monolith, as old as anything in Petra, is carved in the shape of the lower coils of a giant snake. Mecca's Kaaba / Hatra's sculpture and reliefs / Petra's altar of sacrifice.
Desert Expansiveness	Geographic Maps - Herodotus - Hoyland and Zidan	Urban Hierarchy and Divisions	Saba - Petra and Hatra (sections 5.4.1 - 5.4.2 and 5.4.3)
Trade Route Path	Geographic Maps - Herodotus - Hoyland and Zidan		Qaryat al-Fau - Building section mural (section 5.4.4)
Diversity	The land is situated between Syria and Egypt and is divided among many peoples of diverse characteristics. Now the eastern parts are inhabited by Arabs, who bear the name of Nabataeans and range over a country which is partly desert and partly waterless, though a small section of it is fruitful. And they lead a life of brigandage and overrunning a large part of the neighbouring territory they pillage it, being difficult to overcome in war. (Diodorus) Geographic Divisions (section 5.3)		Qaryat al-Fau - The market was constructed near the western edge of the valley which separates the Tuwaiq escarpment from the limits of the town, and to the east of the residential sector. (Al Ansari section 5.4.4)
	That part of Arabia as a whole which lies to the south is called Felix, but the interior part is ranged over by a multitude of Arabians who are nomads and have chosen a tent life. These raise great flocks of animals and make their camps in plains of immeasurable extent... The remaining part of Arabia, which lies towards Syria, contains a multitude of farmers and merchants of every kind. (Strabo)	Fortification / Water Systems and Sophisticated Structures	Hatra - Qaryat al-Fau - Medina (section 5.4.3, 5.4.4 and 5.4.5) Hatra - ...He [Severus] himself made another expedition against Hatra... When a portion of the outer circuit [fortification wall] had fallen in one place and all the soldiers were eager to force their way inside the remainder.
		Social Relations	Saba's bronze statue of a man (section 5.4.1)
		Cultural Exchange	Hatra's statues and wall murals (section 5.4.3)

Figure 48 - Table showing the Initial and Focused Coding for Pre-Islamic Arabian Historical Context. By author.

Language (Poetry and Prose)		
Poetry		Prose
Sub-Themes	Evidence	Evidence
Pride / Heritage / Language	All of Pre-Islamic poetry and the ten Mu'alakat	The most popular Arab account holds that the word "Arab" came from an eponymous father called Ya'rub who was supposedly the first to speak Arabic.
Repetition and Attention to Details	I don't see our sayings except borrowings... or repetitions extracted from previous expressions. (Zuhair ibn ani-Salmah) Attacking, fleeing, advancing, retreating all at once ... as a bolder of rocks flying from a stream high above (Imro al-Qays)	
Morality / Honour and Pride	He helps [the mugger] the women of his tribe anytime they ask him to... until he feels like an exhausted beast.	He observed the strangers frequently engaged in litigation, both with one another and with the natives; but the natives had never any dispute amongst themselves and lived together in perfect harmony
Tribal Support	I heard from Omayya some false allegations [about Hassan] ... and he is not honest in his records ... I will broadcast the truth everywhere and in all the great assemblies of Okaz	
Desert	An army that fills the void ... turning hills into flat deserts She cried, so I said a frightened deer ... who has been harmed in the uninhabited desert A desert [dawwa] that one cannot be guided through its darkness ... neither by known traces nor by a shimmering star	
Sights of Ruins / Memory and Emotional Attachment	Khawla [name of his beloved] has ruins in Barqa Thahmad [a known desert location for Pre-Islamic Arabs] ... that loom like the remainder of a tattoo on the palm of the hand.	
Trade Route / Journey	Stop friends! Let us weep the memory of my beloved and her deserted house ... at the edge of the road between Dakhoul [place] then Hawmali [place] ... then Towidaha [place] then al-Mikrat [place], the traces are still there. A glass [of wine] that you drank in Ba'albak [a town in Lebanon] ... and another in Damascus without sharing	It is a great Grace and Protection from Allah, for the taming of the Quraish, And with all those Allah's Grace and Protections for their taming, We cause the (Quraish) caravans to set forth safe in winter (to the south), and in summer (to the north without any fear). The caravans between Yemen, Phoenicia and Egypt had special routes with specific stops, equipment and guards, facilitating its journey. For, the caravan moves from Hadramawt or Oman towards the north guarded by the Arabs of Qidar, who escort it through al-Dahna'a until it reaches Dadan, then it moves west towards Najd until it reaches Hijaz. From there, the caravans are entrusted to the people of Median, Edom or Nabataea, who escort it to Mecca or Medina and then to Petra via Mada'an Saleh. From Petra, the caravan moves north to Phoenicia and Palestine then Tadmur, or it moved west to Egypt.
Environment (Natural and Built)	[This camel] has thighs full of flesh as if they were the doors of a glistening castle... [Its bones] like a Roman arch whose lord swore to perfectly build by glazed stone. O' my eyes be generous and do not freeze ... Will you not cry over Sakhr [her brother] the sweet. (al-Khansaa)	The country of the Sabaei, a very populous nation, is contiguous and is the most fertile of all, producing myrrh, frankincense, and cinnamon. Mariaba, the capital of the Sabaeans, is situated upon a mountain, well wooded. The capital of the Nabataeans is called Petra. It is situated on a spot which is surrounded and fortified by a smooth and level rock (Petra), which externally is abrupt and precipitous, but within there are abundant springs of water both for domestic purposes and for watering gardens.
Urban References	[This camel] has thighs full of flesh as if they were the doors of a glistening castle... [Its bones] like a Roman arch whose lord swore to perfectly build by glazed stone (Tarafa ibn al-'Abd) - All Pre-Islamic poetry describes vividly the different sensory experiences.	
Life Lessons	Man wishes to live, and long life might harm him ... His smile perishes, and after life's sweetness what remains is its hardship. (Dhubyani)	
Shaitan El-Sh'r	I did not know how to speak [poetry], yet I believe ... that Misshal [his devil] composes for me the words I utter.	
Idols / Gods Superstitions /	I do not see anyone similar to him [al-Nu'man's] and in this I exclude no one... Except for Solomon who was ordered by God to guide people away from wrong doing... and to enslave Djinn in order to build Tadmur [Palmyra] with stones and columns. The crow affirmed that our journey starts tomorrow ... so informed us the large black raven. The Ghoul in my hands sometimes disappears... then appears again like a torchlight.	I requested Malik ibn Haritha, 'Describe to me Wadd [Pre-Islamic Arabian God] in such a way which would make it appear vividly before me.' Malik replied: 'It was the statue of a huge man, as big as the largest of human beings, covered with two robes, clothed with the one and cloaked with the other, carrying a sword at its waist and a bow on his shoulder, and holding in one hand a spear to which he had attached a flag, and in the other a quiver full of arrows

Figure 49 - Table showing the Initial and Focused Coding for Pre-Islamic Arabian Language. By author.

Lived Experience (Rituals - Sensory Experience and Myth)			
Events		Rituals	
Sub-Theme	Evidence	Sub-Themes	Evidence
Trading	When the tents are put up at Okaz ... trading starts, and thousands congregate.	Religious Obligations	She said I see you travelling partner refusing courtship, know that old age will not spare you ... [He said] May Wadd [Pre-Islamic God] bless you, it is not appropriate for us to pursue pleasure when religion[Hajj] is calling upon us ... We are persisting to go through its hardship seeking God's favours and blessings.
Sensory Experience	All Pre-Islamic poetry describes vividly the different sensory experiences encountered by Pre-Islamic Arabs. These experiences include natural, urban and supernatural phenomena.	Light/Darkness and Visible/Invisible	Architectural motifs, poetry and urban divisions support this observation.
Activities	In addition to poetry, al-Afghany tells of the multiple functions of the ancient market, which aside from its primary task of facilitating the trade of silk, oils, raisins, weapons, leather, spices and many foreign products, played a major role in settling inter-tribal disputes, passing of judiciary laws, propagating major social issues concerning marriage, slavery and illnesses, forging of economic and political alliances, preaching on religious and ethical values and conducting sporting events, such as wrestling.	Hajj	According to the 9th-century Islamic historian and commentator al-Azrakī (died c. 864), the rituals of Hajj started a month prior to the sacred month of Dhu-al-Hajja. On the first day of Dhu-al-Ka'ada (Arabian lunar month) they proceed to Sūq Okaz, where they stay for twenty nights trading in their markets, while strictly following the banners of their respective leaders and remaining within their specified housing premises if they are not trading in the middle of the Sūq. After the first twenty days, the groups proceed closer to Mecca to inaugurate their second Sūq of Majannah, which lasts for ten days. On the first day of Hajj, the groups proceed to Mount Arafat, where they establish their final Sūq of Dhu-al-Majaz that lasts for eight nights after which the caravans start the ritual of Tarwiya, or collecting water for the journey to Arafat and Muzdalifa, which lacked the sources of water.
Poetry Duels	Okaz was particularly renowned as a forum for poetry reading and verse duels between competing poets. It played a crucial role in upgrading the linguistic skills of the tribes, unifying Arabic grammar and syntax, and establishing generally accepted modes of expression in poetry and oral discourse.		I pray for protection to the God of people from all harm that might be inflicted upon us... and to the House in the heart of Mecca and to Allah who is the all-knowing ... and to the Black Stone that they touch and reside next to from dawn to dusk ... and Abraham's footprint on the muddy rocks where he stood barefoot ... and the running sprees between Safa and Marwa ... for all those who came to Hajj to visit God's House whether riding or walking ... performing all its sacred rituals.
Traces	Stop friends! Let us weep the memory of my beloved and her deserted house ... at the edge of the road between Dakhoul [place] then Hawmalī [place] ... then Towidaha [place] then al-Mikrat [place], the traces are still there.	Caravan Stations and Protocols	The caravans between Yemen, Phoenicia and Egypt had special routes with specific stops, equipment and guards, facilitating its journey. For, the caravan moves from Hadramawt or Oman towards the north guarded by the Arabs of Qidar, who escort it through al-Dahna'a until it reaches Dadan, then it moves west towards Najd until it reaches Hijaz. From there, the caravans are entrusted to the people of Median, Edom or Nabataea, who escort it to Mecca or Medina and then to Petra via Mada'in Saleh. From Petra, the caravan moves north to Phoenicia and Palestine then Tadmur, or it moved west to Egypt.

Figure 50 - Table showing the Initial and Focused Coding for Pre-Islamic Arabian Lived Experience. By author.

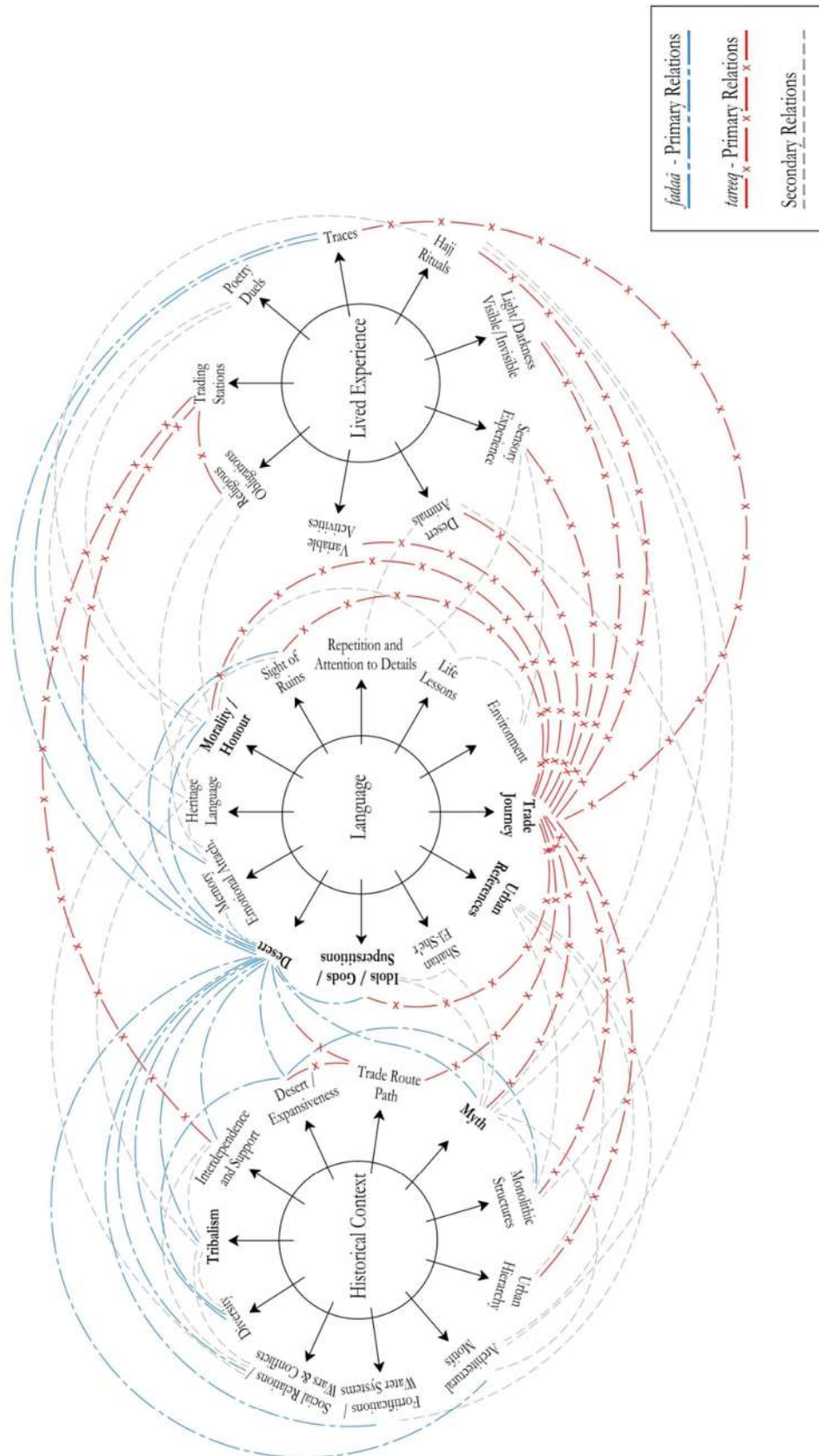


Figure 51 - Diagram showing preliminary connections between the different sub-themes in relation to the larger categories of History - Language - Lived Experience. By author.

5.6.2 Thematic Analysis: Idea Networking Diagram

The **previous** discussions suggest that Sūq-ness is an integral component in Pre-Islamic Arabia's life-world, owing to its direct relationship to this era's two emblematic factors: the desert and the trade route. For, the case studies (section 5.3) suggest that the urban strategies of the region represent a mixture of different influences—Hellenistic, Roman and Parthian—and that these influences played a role in defining each of Pre-Islamic Arabia's regions. Despite some apparent physical differences, like architectural articulation, artistic expressions and clothing styles, the poetic heritage of Pre-Islamic Arabia (section 5.4) also points to the importance of language in creating some unified horizon over these competing tribes/kingdoms. While the case studies offered indirect clues regarding the urban logic of Pre-Islamic Arabian Sūqs, particularly its relationship to the temple, poetic heritage suggests that the desert, the trade route and seasonal Sūqs played an important role in sustaining some relative peace among these regions through the ideas of pilgrimage and sacred months (section 5.2.3). This is also implied in the following Idea Network diagram (IN), which maps all of the previously identified themes and their interconnections. By positioning every major theme as a communication node (section 3.5.3), the IN locates the Sūq's different clusters of meaning and their possible variations in response to different contextual situations. An important cluster suggested by the IN is that of the desert (A) and the trade route (B), both of which are connected through the trade route's path (B6). This connection allows the desert to appear as a vessel that gathers everyday experiences and organizes them into a series of daily challenges and latent opportunities. Through this clustering (A+B+B6), the desert's physical presence as an empty site or '*faragh*, (فراغ) is overridden, allowing its symbolic meaning as a space or '*fadaā*' (فضاء) to be revealed. In other words, this clustering redefines the mental image of the desert from an empty place where lostness, forgetfulness and finitude prevail, to an active space of revelation, discovery and remembrance. This is also proposed through the relationships created by points A (Desert) and A6 (Expansiveness), as well as the blue lines of the FCD. These relationships suggest more than one possible narrative relating to the desert's

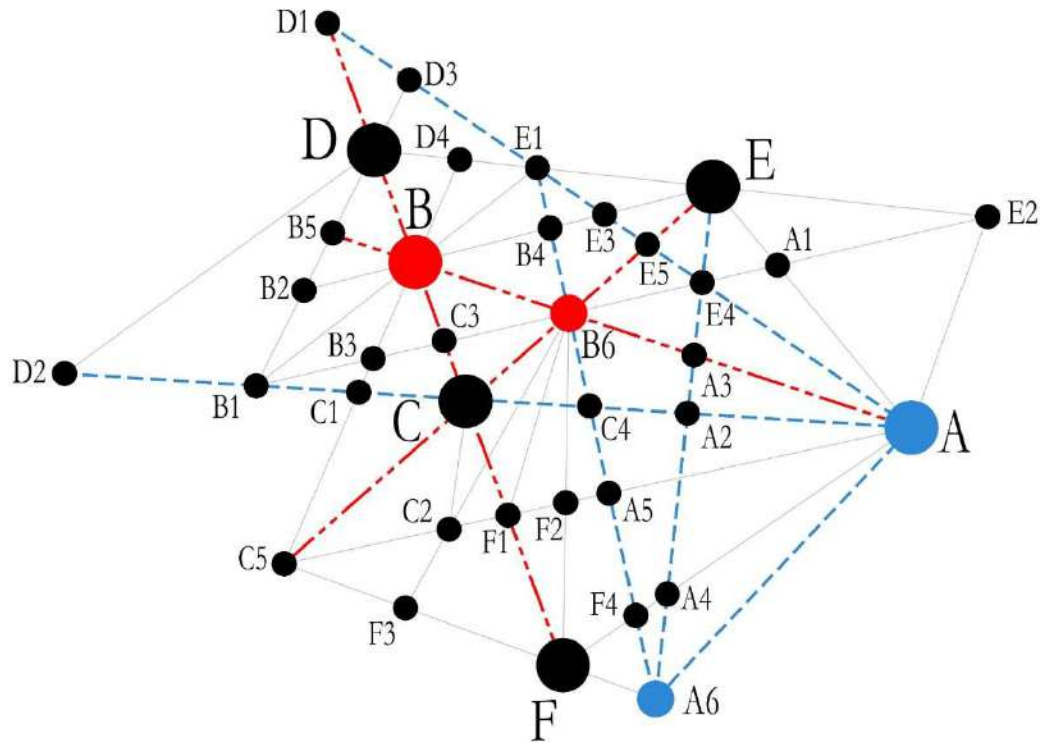


Figure 53 - Idea Network Diagram for Pre-Islamic Arabia, showing the major thematic clusters and the relationship between the different evidences. By author.

symbolic manifestations in Pre-Islamic Arabi's social, urban and mythic relations. One such narrative (Fig. 53a) is found in the IN's converging lines that connect point (A) to (D1) and (D2), suggesting the *fadaā*'s capacity in bringing order to the rather unordered nature of Pre-Islamic Arabia's desert life. By summoning variable natural (E4) and supernatural encounters (E3), the desert's everyday experience seems to transform many such phenomena into catalysts of aesthetic and religious innovations. The IN traces this idea through a plethora of evidences, like architectural motifs (D3), monolithic structures (D1), *Hajj* rituals (E4) and the superstitious belief in *Shaitan el-She'r* (E5), which together seem to have shaped a Pre-Islamic Arab's poetic experience of the desert. The diagram also suggests that the desert gathers an amalgam of memories (A2), conflicts (C4), tribal zones (C), activities (B1) and fortified towns (D2), which together seem to encapsulate the cultural heritage of the region, including its poetic innovations (C1). In this way, the desert (A) emerges as an organizing whole, whose disparate parts coalesce to form the larger meaning of being-in-the-desert. Furthermore, the IN diagram portrays (Fig. 53b) that the trade route (B) and its path (B6) manifest

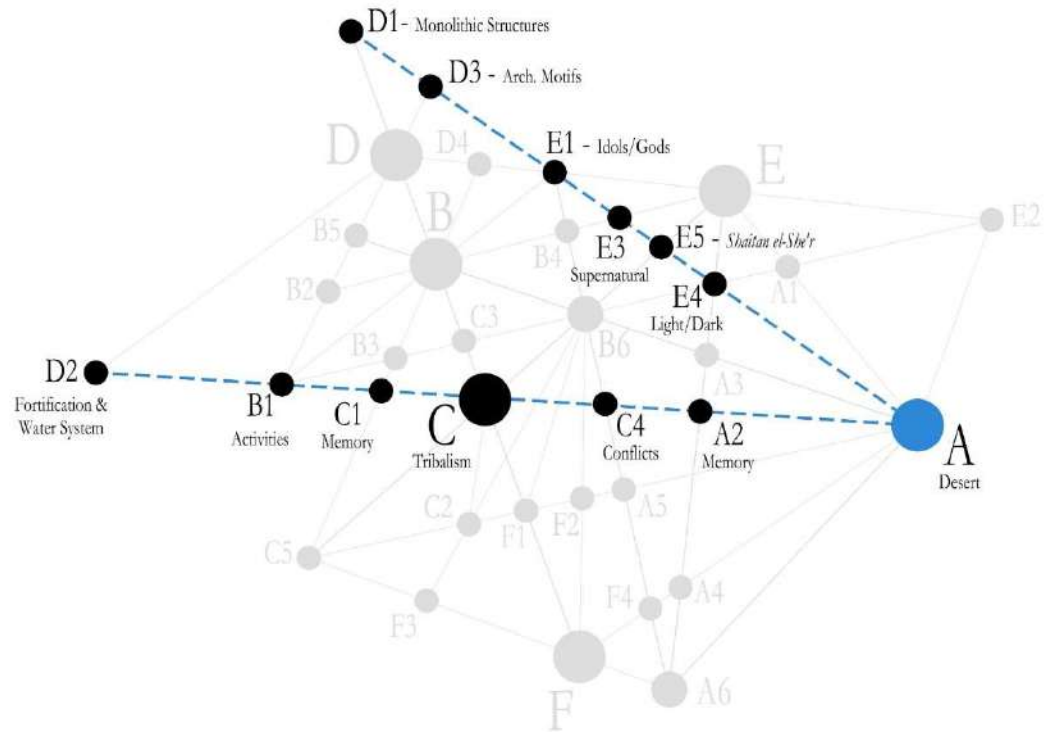


Figure 53a - Idea Network Diagram for Pre-Islamic Arabia, highlighting relationship between A-D2-D1. By author.

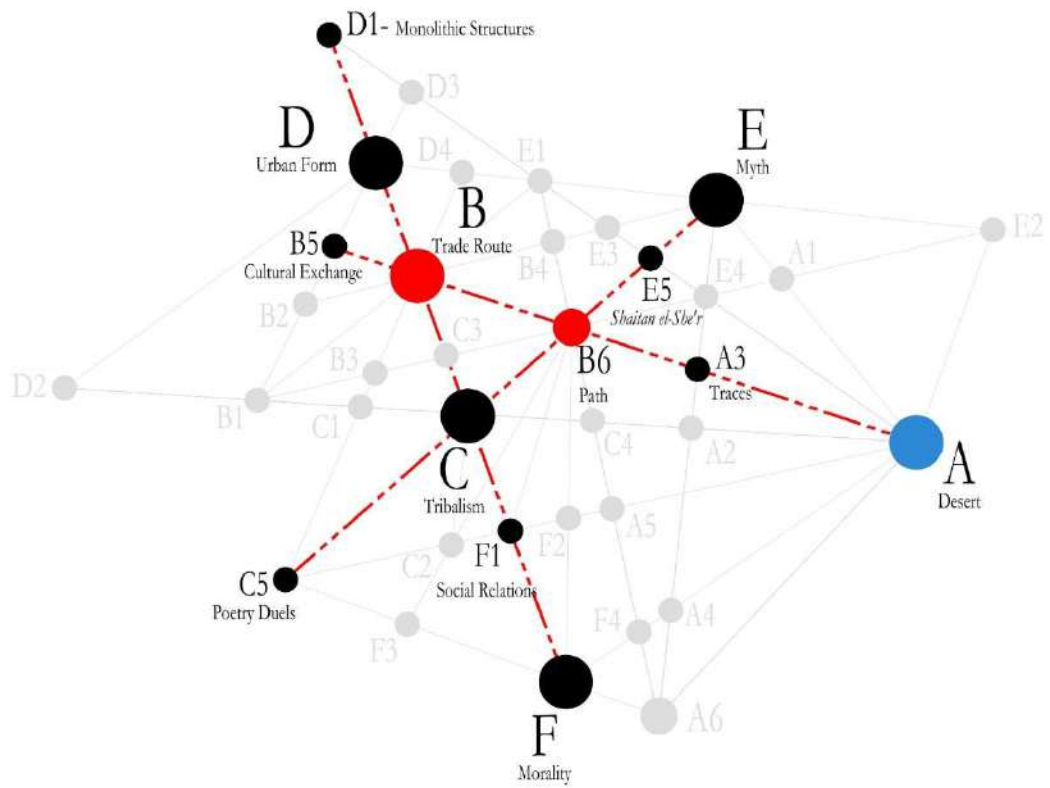


Figure 53b - Idea Network Diagram for Pre-Islamic Arabia, highlighting relationship between B-B6 and other major themes. By author.

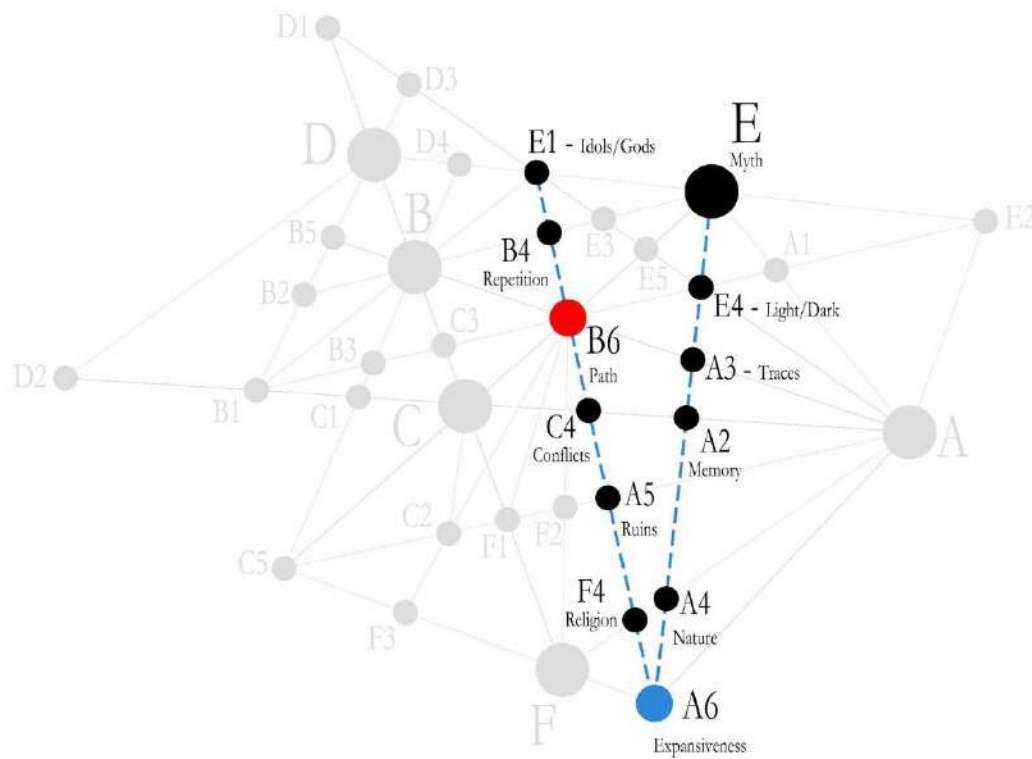


Figure 53c - Idea Network Diagram for Pre-Islamic Arabia, highlighting relationship between A6-E1-E. By author.

themselves as mediators between the desert's poetic experience and its everyday realities, sustaining 'safe' communication and cultural exchange (B5) among the diverse, let alone hostile, tribal kingdoms and their neighbouring superpowers—Rome and Persia. Whether through some religious obligations, trading agreements or tribal coalitions (section 5.6.1), the IN diagram suggests a strong relationship between Pre-Islamic Urbanism (D), Trading (B), Tribalism (C) and Morality (F), bringing forth the imperative role that Pre-Islamic Sūqs played in sustaining the region's moral, cultural, religious, social, political and economic wellbeing.

So, it is implied that the desert's *fadaā* (A6) commits to the act of *ifdaā* (إفشاء) by holding together the totality of Arabia's embodied meanings (Fig. 53c) relating to religious obligations (F4), environmental challenges (A4), mythic beliefs (E4 and E1), memories (B2), conflicts (C4) and poetic reflections (B4). This could be further elucidated through the variable linguistic usages of the term *fadaā* (Fig. 54), which, similar to Heidegger's jug, present the Arabian desert as a

Figure 54 - Table compiling different poetic expressions related to the use of the term *'fadaā'* at variable historical situations. The Arabic term is in Bold and its English translation in relation to the poetic use/context is also in Bold.

Era	Poet	Arabic Verses	English Translation
Pre-Islamic	Imro'o al-Qays	بلادٌ عريضةٌ وأرضٌ أريضةٌ.... مَدافعٌ غَيْبٌ في فضاءٍ عريض	<i>Vast countries and green lands ... shots of rain in a vast space/sky</i>
Islamic	Ali Ibn Abi Talib	فما لك قد أقمتَ بدارٍ ذلٍّ... وأرضَ لله واسعةَ فضاءٍ	<i>Why do you stay in the house of humiliation... when God's land is vast and free</i>
	Al-Mutanabi	من كلِّ من ضاقتْ الفضاءُ بجيشه... حتى توى فحواه لحدِّ الضيق	<i>From all those whose armies occupied the land... until it has been filled to congestion</i>
Post-Islamic	Adonis	يا قصةَ تسيرِ بي دربها إلى فضاءٍ الزمنِ الأولِ	<i>A story whose path walks me towards the space of first times</i>
	Nazik al-Malaika	فإذا بلغنا المنحنى، خلفناه خاتمةَ الشفاء، فإذا فضاءٌ!	<i>When we reached the bending road, we thought it was the end of agony, yet it was blank!</i>

vessel that constitutes of an expansive void-ness and a capacity of holding and giving. Heidegger explains this idea, stating,

How does the jug's void hold? It holds by taking what is poured in. It holds by keeping and retaining what it took in. The void holds in a twofold manner: taking and keeping. The word "hold" is therefore ambiguous. Nevertheless, the taking of what is poured in and the keeping of what was poured belong together. But their unity is determined by the outpouring for which the jug is fitted as a jug. The twofold holding of the void rests on the outpouring. In the outpouring, the holding is authentically how it is. To pour from the jug is to give. The holding of the vessel occurs in the giving of the outpouring. Holding needs the void as that which holds. The nature of the holding void is gathered in the giving.⁴⁵⁰

In this light, the trade path (B6) and its Sūqs (both local and seasonal) emerge as integral constituents of the Pre-Islamic Arabian *fadaā*'s 'giving' capacity, acting as a path *'tareeq'* (طريق) that facilitates the dispersal, reciprocation and redefinition of these meanings.⁴⁵¹ This interpretation is based on the original meaning of the term *tareeq* and its different usages in Arabia's literary history (Fig. 55). For, the term *tareeq* is derived from the root *'tarraqa'* (طَرَق), which means building a road, making something easier, instating a method or habit,

⁴⁵⁰ Martin Heidegger, "The Thing," in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, by Martin Heidegger, translated by Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), 169.

⁴⁵¹ Heidegger, "The Thing," 170-172.

Era	Poet	Arabic Verses	English Translation
Pre-Islamic	Almost all Pre-Islamic celebrated poems have detailed descriptions of the traveling journey, the mode of transportation and different sights along the route, as discussed in al-Asfahani's book <i>Kitab al-Aghany</i> and other sources.		
Islamic	Abu Nuwas	بكل طريق لي من الحب راصد... بكنيه سيف للهوى وسنان	In all my love routes there is an onlooker... in his hands a sword and a spear.
	Ibn Arabi	لا تدعي في طريق أنت سالكه... وإنما أمره مكارم الخلق	Do no preach in a road you are taking... instead advise on high morals
Post-Islamic	Mahmoud Darwish	ساقطع هذا الطريق الطويل، وهذا الطريق الطويل إلى آخره... فما عدت أخسر غير الغبار وما مات مني وصف النخيل	I will cross this long path , and this long path ... I have nothing to lose but dust, for in me the image of the palm is still alive.
	Ahmed Shawky	وجدت الحياة طريق الزمر... إلى بعثة وشؤون آخر	I found that life is a passageway for different groups... to an expedition and other matters

Figure 55 - Table compiling different poetic expressions related to the use of the term '*tareeq*' at variable historical situations. The Arabic term is in Bold and its English translation in relation to the poetic use/context is also in Bold.

forging coins or metal, conceiving a baby, and the coming out of stars at night.⁴⁵²

These variable significations grant the trade route, as a physical manifestation of the *tareeq*, the ability to play many different roles and to make room for diverse sensory experiences (A4). For, poetic evidences portray how Arabic language had the greatest effect in establishing, sustaining and developing a Pre-Islamic Arab's understanding of being-in-space and being-with-others, mediating between the physical experience of the desert/trade route and its poetic interpretations. Therefore, it is possible to suggest that the *fadaā/tareeq* duality presents itself as the essence of Pre-Islamic Arabia's Sūq-ness, turning the apparent emptiness of the desert into a gathering of meaningful events and sacred rituals, and the trade route's path into a succession of safety nodes. This quality possibly played the greatest role in instigating a Pre-Islamic Arab's critical thinking skills, in challenging his/her imaginative capacities and in paving the way for variable modes of social participation. On a physical level, this is exemplified through the water innovations of Petra (D2), the sculptural reliefs of Hatra (D3) as well as in the processions of *Hajj* (E2). On a mental level, this was translated into an array of symbolic associations, which took as their main subjects the rituals, animals,

⁴⁵² *Mu'jam al-Ma'ani al-Jame'*, s.v. "طَرَقَ," online, <https://www.almaany.com/ar/dict/ar-ar/%D8%B7%D9%8E%D8%B1%D9%8E%D9%82%D9%8E/> (accessed May 14, 2018).

trading journeys, love stories, evil spirits, superstitions, moral obligations and belief systems of the era. The mirror-play between the physical and the mental is forcefully present in the layout and urban hierarchy of many Pre-Islamic towns (D4), and their monolithic structures (D1), including the *Djinn* blocks, snake monuments and *Kaaba* (section 5.2).

5.7 Conclusion of Part (01)

The above discussions suggest that the journey along Arabia's desert and its ancient trade route allowed Pre-Islamic Arabs to sustain their being as individuals, nomadic communities and settled kingdoms. This journey also seems to have granted them some means to position themselves within a specific temporal/spatial horizon, to regulate everyday lived experiences in line with their functional needs and to ground their understanding of the world on variable forms of revelation. For, the gathering/giving capacity of the desert anchored Pre-Islamic Arabs to their direct space of dwelling and facilitated the reciprocation of many socially-constructed meanings, among which the duality of *fadaā/tareeq* seems to be of integral relevance. The chapter discussed how this duality has been translated into urban zoning strategies, architectural motifs, seasonal trading caravans, pilgrimage rituals and an abundance of emotional expressions that have been celebrated during their seasonal Sūqs' poetry battles. In this light, the *fadaā/tareeq* duality emerges as an essential component of Pre-Islamic Arabia's spatial experience, transforming Sūqs into active socio-cultural gatherings, whose sanctity was governed by trading protocols as well as by the various religious rituals that orchestrated their establishment at various geographic spots, whether inside or outside of towns. This interpretation is supported by many archaeological clues, particularly the temples of Pre-Islamic Arabia, which show a seamless mixture of influences (Greek, Roman Parthian and Arab) and a strong relationship to ancient trade (sections 5.3.1-5.3.4). The saturation of such cultural influences seems to decrease as we move southwards towards the original home of many Arab tribes, allowing us to get glimpses of what seems to be an authentic Arabian expressions then. This originality is also found in many of the era's

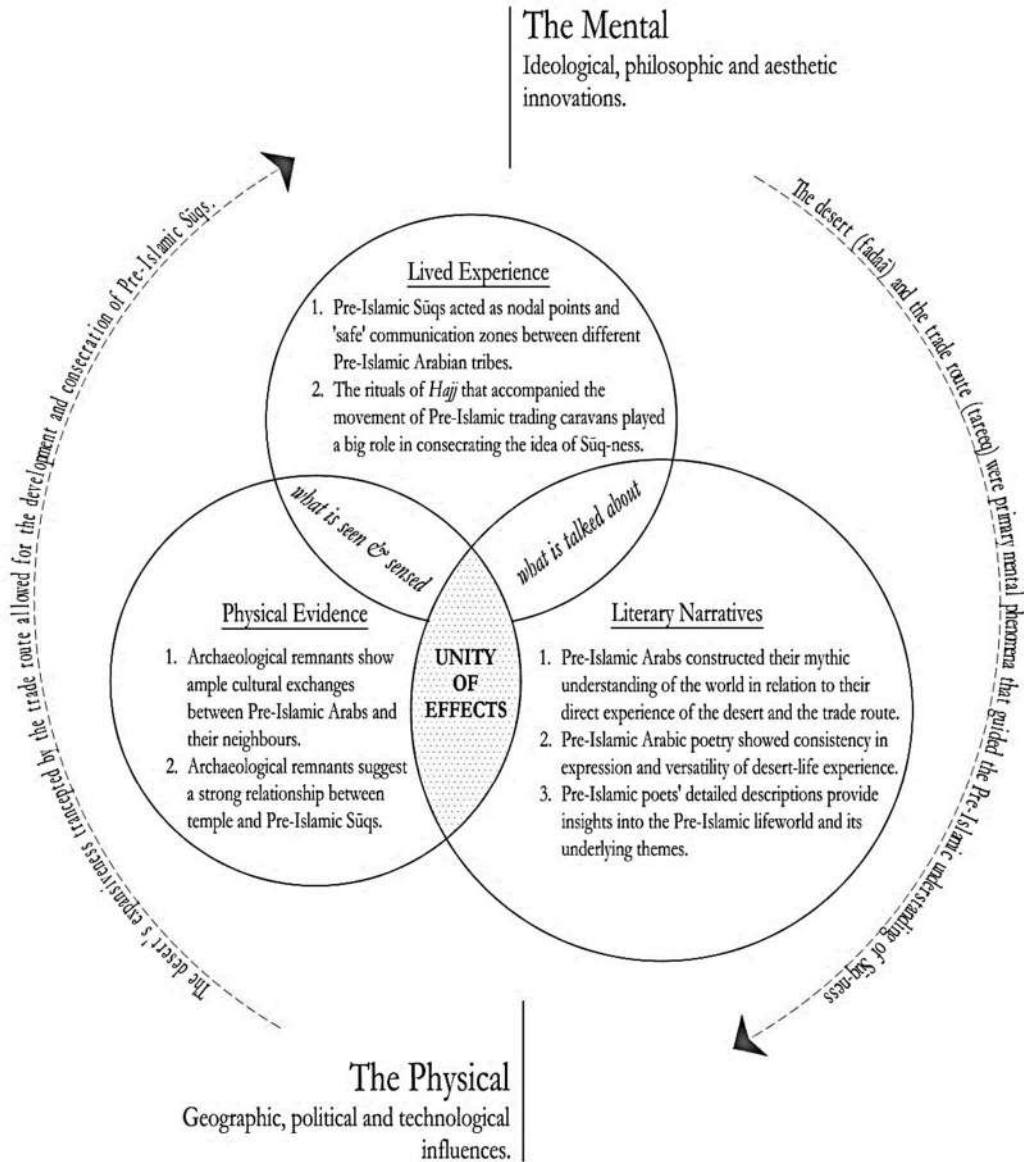
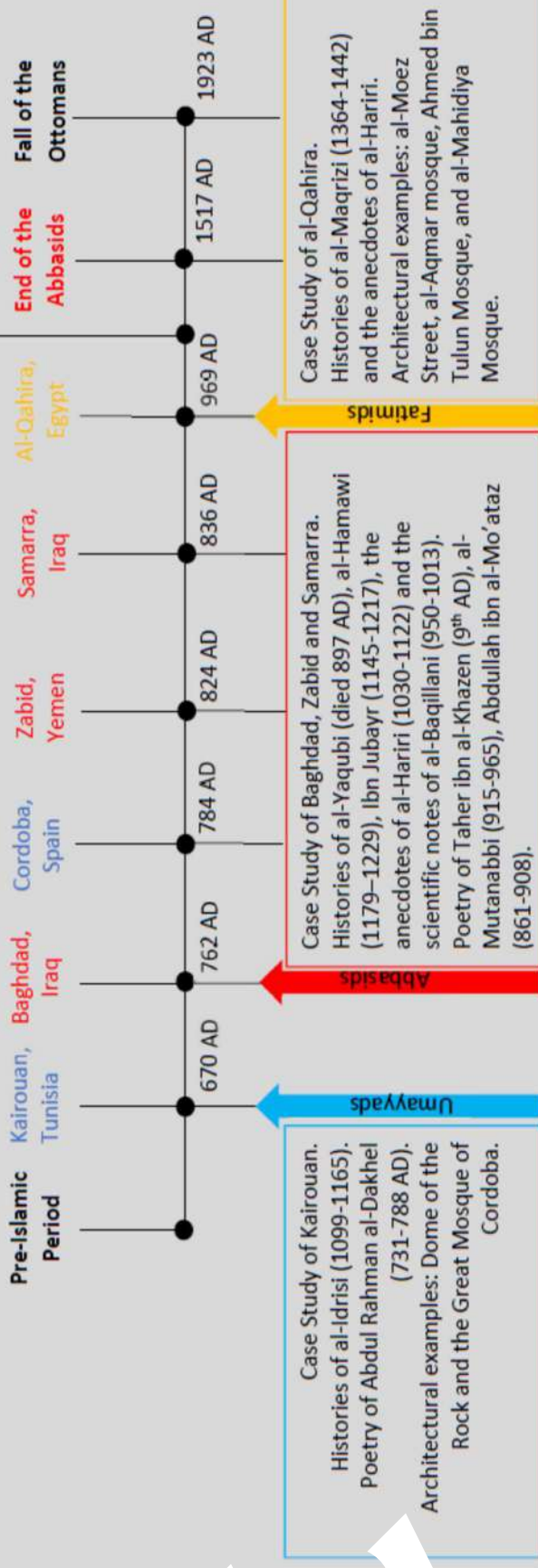


Figure 56 - Diagram showing the triangulation of Pre-Islamic findings. By author

poetic conventions, which demonstrate a Pre-Islamic Arab's indispensable relationship to the trade route, its rituals and its Sūqs (section 5.4). The triangulation of previously discussed evidences supports such interpretation, putting into question many prejudices that encircle our current understanding of this historical period (section 4.3) and raising other questions regarding the possible role of Pre-Islamic Sūqs in shaping their later Islamic counterparts. So, the following chapter will examine the development of the Sūq during the Islamic era and will test whether and how its lived experience has changed. It will also test the role of the *fadaā/tareeq* duality, if any, in rehabilitating the Pre-Islamic understanding of Sūq-ness in accordance to some newly espoused social, political and religious ideals.

1258 AD – Sack of Baghdad by Mongols



6

Chapter Six

Interpretation of the Parts (2)
Islamic Sūqs in-between *tajalli* and *wahm***6.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter discussed the development of Pre-Islamic Arabian Sūqs and identified some of the historical effects that seem to have shaped the era's socio-urban relations. The chapter also discussed the role of some natural, social and mythic factors in developing Arabic language's spatial imagery, presenting themselves as recurrent themes in Pre-Islamic Arabian poetics. By revealing so, the previous chapter pointed to the importance of language as a mediator of some 'historical truth' that not only affected the Pre-Islamic Arabian horizon but possibly also extended itself to guide the later Islamic perspective of the world. This chapter will test this proposition, putting into question some current presuppositions regarding the historical foundation of Islamic urbanism and its accompanying architectural expressions (sections 1.2 and 4.3-4.6).

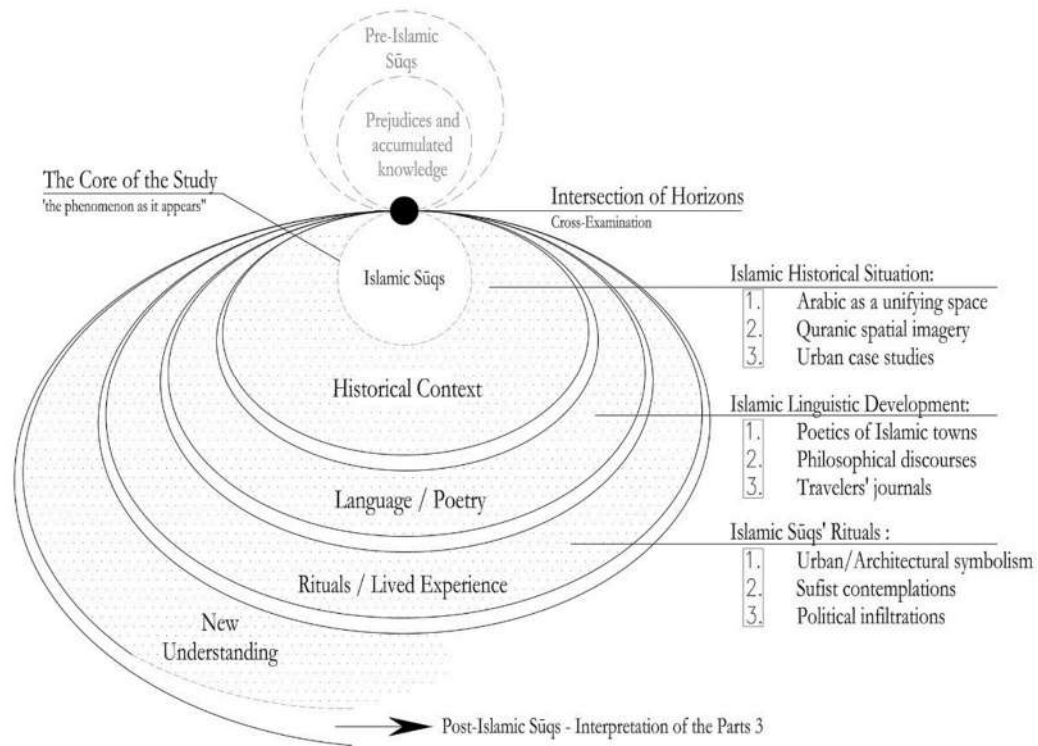


Figure 57 - Hermeneutic Circle of Islamic stage, portraying the different research variables and examined data pools. Illustration by author.

So, unlike some of the previously discussed studies that explain Islamic Arabia's urban development using physical evidence alone, this chapter makes use of some contemporaneous Arabic poetry and literature to explore the Islamic town's planning strategies and modes of socio-urban participation under the Arabian rule of the Umayyads, Abbasids and Fatimids. The chapter also examines whether and how the Islamic Sūq's experience still embodies some of the previously discussed Pre-Islamic Arabian themes, particularly that of *fadaā/tareeq* duality. By doing so, the chapter suggests that while the Pre-Islamic Sūqs' physical form differs from its Islamic counterpart, they possibly share some Arabian meanings that have been rehabilitated according to some contingent religious, political, social and technological needs. This proposition is explored through a range of evidence, including urban case studies, architectural examples, poetry, travel journals and Quranic interpretations. By consulting this range of physical and poetic evidences, the chapter attempts to identify the different channels of social/cultural negotiations that possibly allowed the *fadaā/tareeq* duality to be transmitted both geographically—as a result of military conquests—

and socially—as a result of migration/settlement out of the Arabian Peninsula, hence granting the Islamic town its ‘franchised’ Arabian character (section 4.7). For this reason, the chapter starts by discussing the role of Arabic language in transmitting some Pre-Islamic ideals and adapting them to the newly established Islamic situation. This is followed by several urban case studies that portray the different political, religious and social effects orchestrating the development of Islamic Sūqs in Arabia. Afterwards, the chapter examines the different poetic narratives that have been constructed around the experience of some Islamic towns, using the works of contemporaneous poets, Sufist thinkers and travellers. The chapter concludes with a thematic analysis, explaining whether and how a Muslim Arab domesticated many of his/her earlier references in line with a ‘new’ religious perspective. Similar to the previous chapter’s interpretive approach, the impetus of language as an “integral connection with the things themselves” will be emphasized, demonstrating the role of Arabic language, as a living tradition, in displacing the meaning of Sūq-ness from its Pre-Islamic understanding to variable Islamic interpretations.⁴⁵³

6.2 Historical Context: Islamic Redefinitions of the *fadaā/tareeq* Duality

The previous chapter suggested that the Pre-Islamic Arabian perspective positioned the *fadaā* as the nexus between the desert’s expansiveness and the trade route’s path, making room for variable ‘divine’ revelations and a versatility of mundane events. Through this reading, the *tareeq* emerges as a mediator between a Pre-Islamic Arab’s experience of the world and his socially-negotiated meaning of being-alongside-others. For example, the previous chapter’s findings suggest that a Pre-Islamic Arab’s understanding of mortality oscillated between physical finitude on the one hand and an emphasis on morality, honour and memory on the other. This is implied at many instances in Pre-Islamic poetry, like Oday Ibn al-Rala’a’s following verses,

⁴⁵³ Brice R. Wachterhauser, *Beyond Being: Gadamer's Post-Platonic Hermeneutical Ontology* (Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1999), 98.

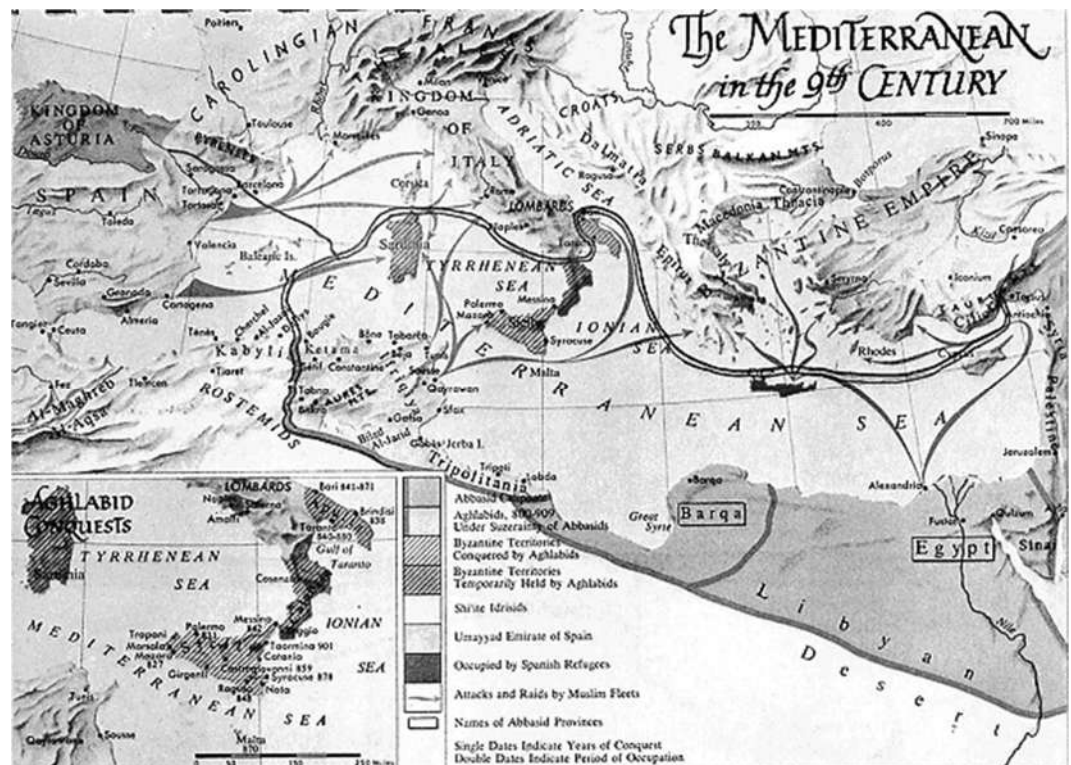
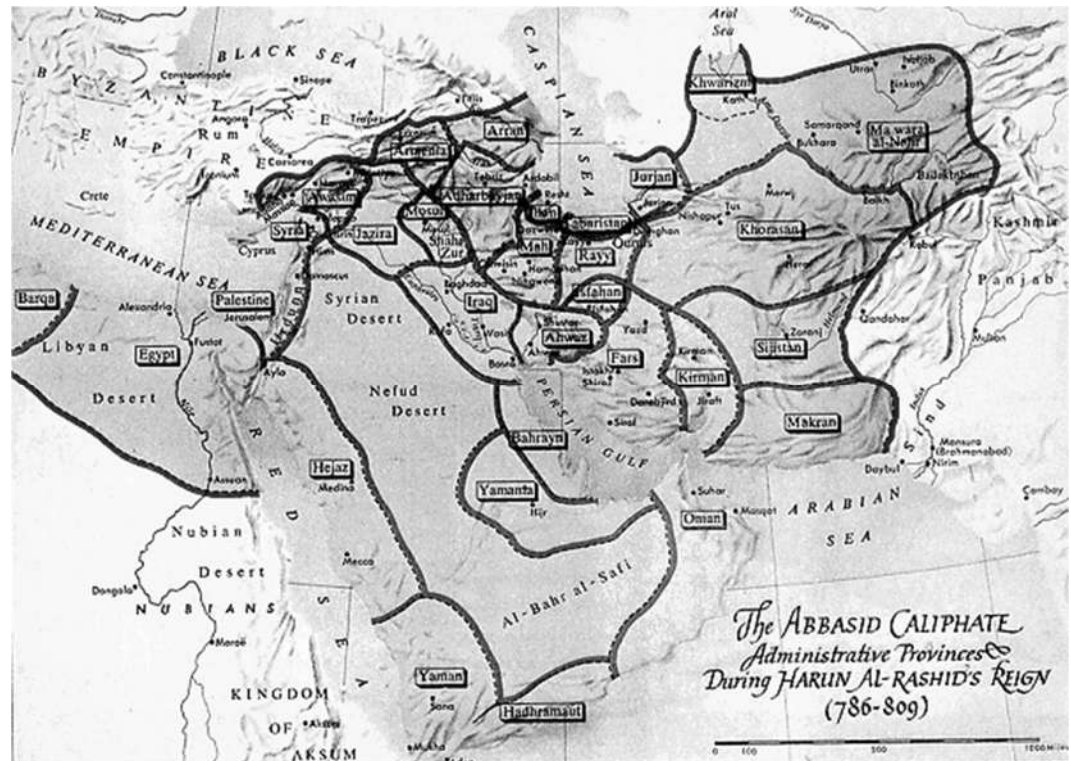


Figure 58 – Maps of the Islamic Empire in the 9th century under the Arabian rule of the Abbasids. Maps extracted from R Roolvink's *Historical Atlas of the Muslim Peoples* (1957), 6-7.

*The dead is not the one who passed away hence relieved... but is
the one who is dead yet still alive
The dead is the one who is living in disgrace ... with ill thoughts
and little hope.*⁴⁵⁴

This moral stance extended itself to the Islamic era, as understood from the following verses by Imam al-Shafei (767-820 AD),

*Some people died but their good deeds survive... and some others
live and among people they are considered dead.*⁴⁵⁵

Accordingly, it is possible to suggest that the idea of honourable-living offers one link between the Pre-Islamic and Islamic approaches to dwelling, where “the ever-oscillating presence/non-presence of death opens mortals to language as a way of marking its trace, and constitutes mortality as “dwelling” in the sense of exposure to others and to the radiance of things.”⁴⁵⁶ In the case of Islamic Arabia, this idea emerges forcefully through the Islamic belief that it is “God [who] sets the standards for dwelling in the world, by his concealed presence in everything that surrounds us.”⁴⁵⁷ The emphasis on singularity, or Oneness in its religious Islamic sense (section 6.5.1), played a great role in redefining an Arab’s approach to building, dwelling and participating in space, possibly also displacing the Sūq’s socially-manufactured meaning. This displacement was probably related to some prevailing Quranic interpretations (section 6.2.1), which introduced new spatial imageries to Arabia’s socio-urban vocabulary. This brings forth an important question concerning the relationship between Islam as a matter of faith and Islam as a humanistic perspective, in other words a historic situation.⁴⁵⁸ The next sections explore the relevance of this question, using

⁴⁵⁴ Oday Ibn al-Rala’a, “ربما ضربة بسيف صقيل,” Al-Diwan, <https://www.aldiwan.net/poem31.html> (accessed November 2, 2017). Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

ليس من مات فاستراح بميت ... انما الميت ميت الاحياء
انما الميت من يعيش ذليلا ... سيئا باله، قليل الرجاء

⁴⁵⁵ Al-Imam Mohammed bin Idris Al-Shafei, *Diwan al-Imam al-Shafei* (ديوان الإمام الشافعي), Arabic, edited by Mohammed Ibrahim Salim (Cairo: Ibn Sina Library, 2008). Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

قد مات قوم وما ماتت مكارمهم ... وعاش قوم وهم في الناس أموات

⁴⁵⁶ Aylesworth, Gary E., "Andrew J. Mitchell, The Fourfold: Reading the Late Heidegger," *Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews: An Electronic Journal* (June 6), <http://ndpr.nd.edu/news/the-fourfold-reading-the-late-heidegger/> (accessed November 17, 2017).

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁸ Mohammed Arkoun, *L’Humanisme Arabe Au IV^e/X^e Siècle: Miskawayh, Philosophe et Historien*, French, 2ème edition (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1982), III-IV.

Quranic language and its linguistic imagery as tools for uncovering the different possible methods through which a Muslim Arab displaced his/her understanding of the *fadaāl/tareeq* in response to some contemporaneous historical/linguistic situations. This will be explored using the development of the Sūq phenomenon in Islamic Arabia and its relationship to the mosque, or the Islamic temple.

6.2.1 Arabic Language and the Islamic Situation

Having established that Arabic language is a defining characteristic of the region (section 5.4), it is possible to understand the far-reaching effects of Quranic prose not only on the evolution of Arabic language but also on Islamic Arabia's overall aesthetic and urban innovations. Still, there are no clear historical evidences that can determinately explain the methods through which Arabic language bestowed a unifying horizon over the Islamic empire's diverse socio-cultural regions. For, Pre-Islamic Arabia, as discussed in section 5.2.2, was divided among many polarizing political as well as tribal identities, which have been—rather suddenly—promoted into a singular socio-religious phenomenon after the coming of Islam. Moreover, historical references confirm that the official language of most of the newly acquired territories, such as Damascus (634AD), Northern Iraq (634AD) and Egypt (642AD), was not Arabic and that these regions' early Islamic character was solely restricted to matters of everyday politics.⁴⁵⁹ Despite the versatility of the Pre-Islamic Arabian horizon, as discussed through the case studies of chapter 5, it seems that after the coming of Islam much of this diversity has been ignored, focusing chiefly on *Quraish*'s version of Arabness. It also seems that this version has been exported to the Islamic world's different regions, using Quranic text as a tool for integrating these regions' cultural variances into a unified social outlook. For, the great reverence of the Quran, as Islam's holy text, created a powerful bond that preserved the coherence of the disparate Islamic regions and the purity of the linguistic medium. This resulted in an un-precedent pre-occupation with the study of Arabic language, the

⁴⁵⁹ Other papyri show that both Latin and Arabic were used as official languages of the early Islamic dynasties, as also seen in the example of Qurra ibn Sharik's letters (section 4.6).

formalization of its uses and the establishment of its laws and syntax, leading to “its transformation from an obscure dialect into one of the greatest languages of medieval and modern times.”⁴⁶⁰ This also led to the redefinition of aesthetic production and reception, which were now dependent on the ability of a Muslim to understand, interpret and re-adapt Quranic language according to contemporaneous socio-cultural needs.

Accordingly, it could be argued, after Mohammed Arkoun, that the success of Arabic language was hinged on its capacity to reinforce the humanistic outreach of Islam, creating an expanding philosophic vocabulary that was deemed fit as an exploratory medium not only for religious discourses but also for ample scientific and literary adaptations.⁴⁶¹ Sharron Gu supports this proposition, arguing that Islam was not only a revolutionary religious movement in the region but was also a form of linguistic revival,

*The imaginative horizon of pre-Islamic Arabic was very limited; its repertoire of vocabulary was suggestive, ambiguous and pregnant with overlapping levels of meanings. Most important of all, the poetic form was compacted and refined to the point that it restrained imagination. Emotional Expression was tightly locked by worn-out symbols and allusions, and poetry was gradually losing its vitality and flexibility.*⁴⁶²

Gu further argues that the power of Quranic prose lies in the masterful use of language that not only transcends the spiritual barriers between God and believers but also the physical boundaries dividing the disparate regions of the expanding Islamic realm.⁴⁶³ This led to the flourishing of Arabic literature, which now extended beyond poetry and storytelling, venturing into scientific, philosophical and theological treatises. The bulk of written knowledge produced during Islam’s Golden era (8th – 13th century AD) validates such observation and points to the role of religion, technology and politics in redefining the scope and use of language. This is probably best portrayed through the Sufist poetry of Hallaj, Ibn Arabi and Mahmoud Shabastari; the scientific studies of Avicenna, al-Biruni, Ibn

⁴⁶⁰ Chejne, *The Arabic Language*, 8.

⁴⁶¹ Arkoun, *L’Humanisme Arabe Au IV^e/X^e Siècle*, III.

⁴⁶² Gu, *A Cultural History of the Arabic Language*, 115.

⁴⁶³ *Ibid.*, 115-116.

al-Nafees and Ibn-Khaldun; as well as the judiciary and theological interpretations of al-Ghazali and Imam al-Shafei. The following lines by al-Biruni (973-1048) in his historical analysis of India portray it even more explicitly,

*News are not like witnessing. For witnessing means the recognition of the seen by the seeing eye in the time of its existence and the place of its happening... If it was not for the news's possible ill consequences, its value could have preceded that of seeing and witnessing... Writing is one type of news, possibly the noblest of them all, as where would we have known the news of other nations if it was not for the immemorial traces of pens?*⁴⁶⁴

The above statement reveals an important turn in Arabic language's social value, which now moved beyond its Pre-Islamic emotional exigency towards the wider realm of 'news-making,' to use al-Biruni's expression. For, Quranic prose allowed an Arab to expand his/her desert-bound horizon and furnished Islamic societies, both Arabs and non-Arabs, with a variety of images that ranged from extensively detailed stories of bygone communities, promises of heavenly gardens, fearsome punishment methods and above all a concise set of social regulations. Through these images, Arabic language presented itself as a unifying social horizon that positioned Muslims, physically and mentally, in-between some Pre-Islamic socio-moral codes and the aspirations of a new age. In the case of Islamic Arabia, this can be traced through poetry, like the following verses by illustrious Abbasid poet and warrior al-Mutanabbi (915-965),

*The horses and the night and the desert know me ... as well as the sword, the arrow, the paper and the pen*⁴⁶⁵

While al-Mutanabbi's verses are intended as letter of admonition to Sayf al-Dawla al-Hamadani (916-967 AD), the ruler of Aleppo then, they demonstrate the persistence of some Pre-Islamic Arabian concepts, like chivalry, desert and night, and the incorporation of new symbols, such as pen and paper. The synthesis

⁴⁶⁴ Abu al-Rayhan Ahmed Al-Biruni, *Tahqiq malil Hind min maqulah maqboulah fil 'aql aw mardhoulah* (تحقيق ما للهند من مقولة مقبولة في العقل أو مرذولة), Arabic (Haidar Abad: Dar al-Ma'arif al-Othmaniah, 1958), 1. Translation by author. Original Arabic text:

ليس الخبر كالعيان؛ لأن العيان هو إدراك عين الناظر عين المنظور إليه في زمان وجوده وفي مكان حصوله. ولولا لواحق أقات بالخبر، لكانت فضيلته تبين على العيان والنظر.. والكتابة، نوع من أنواع الخبر، يكاد أن يكون أشرف من غيره. فمن أين لنا العلم بأخبار الأمم، لولا خوالد آثار القلم؟

⁴⁶⁵ Al-Mutanabbi, "واحر قلباه ممن قلبه شيم," in *Diwan Al-Mutanabbi* (ديوان المتنبي), Arabic (Beirut: Dar Beirut, 1983), 332. Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text: الخيل والليل والبيداء تعرفني ... والسيف والرمح والقرطاس والقلم

between these old and new symbols allowed an Arab to synchronize many of his historical references in line with Islamic dogmas and beliefs.⁴⁶⁶ This is also portrayed in Islamic urbanism, which again was heavily dependent on Quranic prose and its spatial imagery (section 6.3).

6.2.2 Islamic Spatial Dualities: *benaā/qarar* and *jannah/jahannam*

As suggested above, Arabic language played an important role in bridging the gulf between the Pre-Islamic understanding of dwelling and its Islamic counterpart. While Pre-Islamic Arabs used language as means for grounding their daily experiences in relation to the world around them (section 5.5), Muslim Arabs domesticated their built environment to reflect the linguistic horizon in which they now dwell (section 6.3 and 6.5). The concept of the Divine or *Allah* is of primary importance in this discourse, offering extensive explanations on the purpose of Man, his fate and his relationship to both the sky, as an image of building as opposed to demolition, and to earth, as a metaphor of ‘righteous’ settlement as opposed to aberration. The Quran suggests so in many verses, like,

*It is Allah who made for you the earth a place of settlement and the sky a ceiling [building]*⁴⁶⁷

*[He] who made for you the earth a bed [spread out] and the sky a ceiling [building]*⁴⁶⁸

*Confirming what was before it which guides to the truth and to a straight path.*⁴⁶⁹

These Quranic insinuations possibly affected the understanding and deployment of the terms *fadaā* and *tareeq* in Islamic literature, where the former now became associated with the idea of the sky and the later linked to the idea of earth.

Through these Quranic (re)definitions, the desert’s Pre-Islamic spatial meaning and the trade route’s socially-manufactured value are repositioned, ushering Islamic Arabia to new possibilities of being-in-the-world. Accordingly, the re-interpretation of *fadaā* as sky, hence a place for building or *benaā* (بناء), allowed

⁴⁶⁶ Gu, *A Cultural History of the Arabic Language*, 119.

⁴⁶⁷ Quran (*Ghafer*) 40:64, English translation, <https://quran.com/40> (accessed May 15, 2018)

⁴⁶⁸ Quran (*al-Baqara*) 2:22, English translation, <https://quran.com/2> (accessed May 15, 2018)

⁴⁶⁹ Quran (*al-Ahqf*) 46:30, English translation, <https://quran.com/46> (accessed May 15, 2018)

the act of building to move beyond the physical erection of buildings, gathering, holding and re-organizing a multitude of religiously-mediated meanings. Similarly, the re-interpretations of *tareeq* as earth and earthly events became indispensable components in a Muslim's mode of settlement or *qarar* (قرار), alluding not only to the physical factors delineating human existence—gravity, mortality, natural disasters etc.—but also to the guiding *ethos* that enable one to dwell alongside others in a 'unified' Islamic space. These interpretations are pronounced in many of Islamic Arabia's urban strategies and their contemporaneous descriptions, like travel journals, poetry and historical records, most of which propose that the Islamic city's plan is modelled after the Quranic descriptions of paradise.

According to the Quran, believers are rewarded with an immortal life in paradise in exchange for their good deeds on earth. The concept of exchange is of importance here due to its direct relationship to trade and the Sūq (section 1.3). For, this religious belief possibly led to a shift in an Arab's understanding of being-in-space, displacing the meaning of Sūq-ness from its everyday physical experience and directing it towards a more spiritual context. The overall layout of Islamic cities seems to extrapolate such displacement, deploying some Quranic images that have direct spatial connotations, such as *Jannah* (Paradise), *Jahannam* (Hell) and *al-Sirat al-Mustaqeem* (the straight path). So, it is important to first explain the spatial meanings that these concepts allude to, in order to examine their effects on the development of Islamic urbanism and on a Muslim Arab's understanding of Sūq-ness. Probably, the most important of these concepts is that of *Jannah*, whose ample descriptions in both Quran and Prophet's (PBUH) *hadith*, include,

*Gardens of perpetual residence; they will enter them with whoever were righteous among their fathers, their spouses and their descendants. And the angels will enter upon them from every gate, [saying] (23) "Peace be upon you for what you patiently endured. And excellent is the final home." (24)*⁴⁷⁰

⁴⁷⁰ Quran (*ar-Ra'd*) 13:23-24. English translation, <https://quran.com/13> (accessed December 4, 2017)

Even though the Quran gives many details of Paradise, it is the Prophet's (PBUH) *hadiths* that describes its eight doors, one hundred successive levels of which *al-Firdaws* is the highest, gold and silver bricks, pearl tents, green domes, ruby pebbles, saffron sand, musk paint, as well as its four intercepting rivers of pure water, milk, honey and wine.⁴⁷¹ One specific *hadith* summarizes all these images stating, "it [paradise] has what no eyes have seen, ears have heard, or came across a human's heart."⁴⁷² Additionally, both Quran and *hadith* confirm that paradise is endowed by continuous shade, cool breezes, running water and abundant fruits, presented as eternal rewards for the 'people of the right.'⁴⁷³ More intriguingly, it is claimed that paradise has a grand Sūq to which people are summoned every Friday.⁴⁷⁴ The descriptions of *Jahannam* and its punishment in Islamic sources are likewise extensive, suggesting an array of symbolic references, like its seven doors, fire, left-side and black/red/white flames.⁴⁷⁵ In this light, *al-Sirat al-Mustaqeem*, which is believed to be an intermediate place in between Paradise and Hell, acquires the mythic image of a narrow path that is demarcated by hardship—in other words determination for doing good—and is simultaneously intercepted by desire. This mediating position made room for variable interpretations, turning it into a symbol that denotes people's quest for goodness throughout their everyday experiences on earth. This meaning is implied in the Quran's first chapter, recited by Muslims in all their daily prayers,

*[All] praise is [due] to Allah, Lord of the worlds. The Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful. Sovereign of the Day of Recompense. It is You we worship and You we ask for help. Guide us to the straight path - The path of those upon whom You have bestowed favour, not of those who have evoked [Your] anger or of those who are astray.*⁴⁷⁶

جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا وَمَنْ صَلَحَ مِنْ آبَائِهِمْ وَأَزْوَاجِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِمْ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ يَدْخُلُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ كُلِّ بَابٍ (23) سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِمَا صَبَرْتُمْ فَنِعْمَ عُقْبَى الدَّارِ (24)

⁴⁷¹ Wahid Abdulsalam Bali, *Wasf al-jannah wal nar min sahih al-sunna wal akhbar* (وصف الجنة (و النار من السنة والأخبار), Arabic, 2nd edition (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al- 'Ilmiyah, 2002), 9-43.

⁴⁷² Bali, *Wasf al-jannah wal nar min sahih al-sunna wal akhbar*, 15. The *hadith* as quoted by Bali is found in *Sahih Muslim* (3/45 Nawawi).

⁴⁷³ This is mentioned in the Quran (*al-Waqi'ah*) 56:27-32.

⁴⁷⁴ Bali, *Wasf al-jannah wal nar min sahih al-sunna wal akhbar*, 15. The *hadith* as quoted by Bali is found in *Sahih Muslim* (17/170 Nawawi).

⁴⁷⁵ Ibid., 61-69.

⁴⁷⁶ Quran (*al-Fatiha*) 1:1-7. English translation, <https://quran.com/1> (accessed Sept. 12, 2017).

Accordingly, it is possible to suggest that many such views played a big role in displacing some Pre-Islamic spatial references, particularly those related to the desert, whose symbolic associations with ignorance, scarcity, heat, barrenness and violence reverberate, to a great extent, some Quranic descriptions of hell. Still, the Quran also states that salvation is granted to those who safely cross over *al-Sirat al-Mustaqeem*, whose mediating— or middle—position allowed Muslim Arabs to re-interpret their Pre-Islamic understanding of Sūq-ness away from the physical emptiness of the desert towards the fullness of divine revelations. This possibly also displaced the meaning of the Sūq, which no longer points to the collective ritualistic activities around the trade route alone but also establishes a spiritual connection between man and *Allah*.⁴⁷⁷ This idea, which will be explored in the next sections, is expressed in many Sufist and **non-Sufist** poetry, where paradise is depicted as the starting as well as the endpoint of one's journey and not only its tradeable reward. This is found in many poetic expressions of the Islamic era, such as Avicenna's "Poem on the Soul," where he states,

*A dove (allegory of the soul), both noble and proud, has descended to you from the most exalted of places ... Hidden from all sight, she, who has never been veiled ... She resigned and never wished to stay, but then got attached to the world's void ruins ... I assume she forgot the heavenly vows and the houses that she once never wished to part ... She mourns when she recalls her years in the hunting park, with tears that pour forth and do not stop.*⁴⁷⁸

⁴⁷⁷ This meaning has been conveyed through several Quranic verses, which state that the righteous path towards paradise is full of hardship. The following are few of these verses,

قَالَ فَبِمَا أَغْوَيْتَنِي لَأَقْعُدَنَّ لَهُمْ صِرَاطَكَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ﴿١٦﴾ (الأعراف)
[Satan] said, "Because You have put me in error, I will surely sit in wait for them on Your straight path. (al-Araf 16)
وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ عَنِ الصِّرَاطِ لَنُكَابِرُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾ (المؤمنون)
But indeed, those who do not believe in the Hereafter are deviating from the path. (al-Mu'minun 74)

⁴⁷⁸ Avicenna, "هبطت إليك," in *Ibn Sina (ابن سينا)*, by Abass Mahmoud al-Akad (Cairo: Hindawi Foundation for Education and Culture, 2013), 51. Translation is proposed by author. Original text:

هبطت إليك من المحلّ الأرفع ورقاء ذات تغرّر وتمنع
محجوبة عن كلّ مقلّة ناظر وهي التي سقرت ولم تتبرقع
أنفت وما أنست فلما واصلت ألفت مجاورة الخراب البقع
وأظنها نسبث عهداً بالحمى ومنازل بفراقها لم تقع
حتى إذا اتصلت بهاء هبوطها من ميم مركزها بذات الأجرع
علقت بها ثاء الثقيل فأصبحت بين المعالم والطلول الخضع
تبكي إذا ذكرت عهداً بالحمى بمدامع تهمي ولم تنقطع

To test the effects of this idea on the perception and experience of Islamic Sūqs, the following will explore the different humanistic discourses at play in the experience of Islamic towns, examining not only how Islam shaped the Sūq space but also how an Arab constructed his understanding of Islam through the Sūq's daily experience.

6.3 The Development of Islamic Sūqs: An Urban Overview

The creative basis of most medieval Islamic towns is believed to be inspired by different Quranic descriptions of paradise, as described in the works of William Marçais (1956), A. Hourani (1991) and James Lindsay (2005).⁴⁷⁹ These studies based their arguments on existing urban artefacts and the information provided by some prominent medieval travel journals, like those of al-Baladhuri (806-892), al-Ya'qubi (died 897), al-Moqaddasi (945-1000), Ibn Jubayr (1145-1217) and al-Hamawi (1179–1229).⁴⁸⁰ By doing so, these studies intended to explore the different articulations of Islam, particularly in the fields of urban planning and architecture. As discussed in section 4.3, many such studies resulted in some generalizations that fell short in explaining the relevance of the medieval Islamic urban layout on the development of Arabia's socio-urban discourse before and after the coming of Islam.⁴⁸¹ Still, the claim that there exists an indispensable relationship between the Quranic image of *Jannah* and the planning of Islamic towns is among the many important insights provided by these studies, pointing to a possible shift in an Arab's perception of the world then. This relationship is described in the writings of many medieval travellers, such as Ibn Jubayr's following account of Aleppo,

*As for the city itself, it is a huge subject... surrounded by two walls
that are configured, marvellously made, with large attached*

⁴⁷⁹ Marçais, "L'Islamisme et la Vie Urbaine," 86; Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples*, 55-56; James E. Lindsay, *Daily Life in the Medieval Islamic World* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2005), 93.

⁴⁸⁰ al-Baladhuri, *Futūḥ al-buldān* (فتوح البلدان); al-Moqaddasi, *Aḥsan al-Taqasim fī Marifat al-Aqalim* (أحسن التقاسيم في معرفة الأقاليم), Arabic, 2nd ed., edited by M. J. de Goeje (Leyden: E.J. Brill, 1906); Ibn Jubayr, *Travels of Ibn Jubayr*; al-Hamawi, *Mu'jam al-buldān* (معجم البلدان).

⁴⁸¹ The work of Jean Sauvaget (1901-1950) titled *Les Monuments Historiques de Damas* (1932) trace the physical development of Damascus before and after the coming of Islam, exploring the simultaneous effects of Christianity and Islam on the city's urban form.

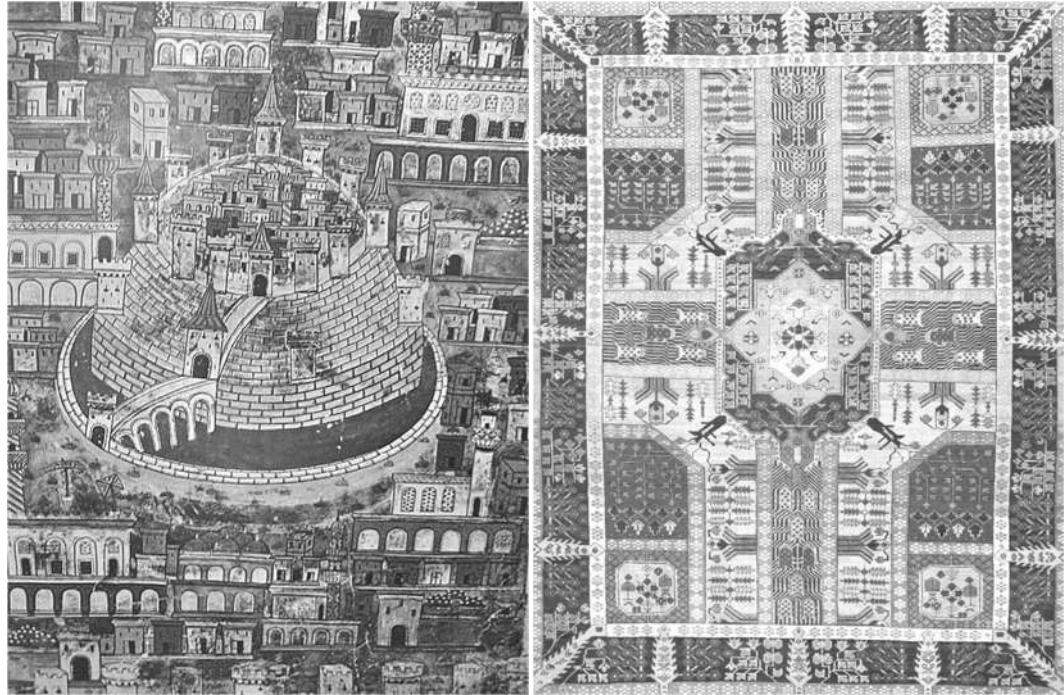


Figure 59 –Left illuminated manuscript of Aleppo by Ottoman cartographer Nasouh. Right, Persian carpet with the four rivers of heaven.

*markets, well designed in a way that you continuously exit from one store to enter the other until you have visited all the city's industries ... The whole market is covered with wooden roofs, so the residents remain in overflowing shade ... Each [of Aleppo's] market captures the sight and mesmerizes its perceivers with sheer beauty... As for its Qaiçaria, it is a garden of beauty and cleanliness surrounding the honoured mosque...*⁴⁸²

In narrating his own experience of the city, Ibn Jubayr uses many Quranic metaphors, such as the flowing water, eternal supply of food, protection, high terraces, carefully configured and marvellously made buildings, overflowing shade and textiles (section 6.2.2).⁴⁸³ These metaphors are recurrent themes in

⁴⁸² Ibn Jubayr, *Travels of Ibn Jubayr*, 251-252. Translation by author. Original Arabic text:

واما البلد فموضوعه ضخم جداً حفيل التركيب بديع الصنع واسع الأسواق كبيرها متصله الانتظام تخرج من سماط صنعة الى سماط صنعة أخرى الى أن تفرغ من جميع الصناعات المدنية وكلها مسقف بالخشب فسكانها في ظلال وارفة فكل سوق منها تقيد الابصار حسناً وتستوقف المستوفز تعجباً واما قيسارياتها فحديقة بستان نظافة وجمالاً مطيفة بالجامع...

⁴⁸³ The following are some Quranic verses that validate this proposition:

{وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سَنُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا فِيهَا أَنْهَارٌ مَطْهُرَةٌ وَسَنُدْخِلُهُمْ ظِلًّا ظَلِيلًا} [النساء: 57].

But those who believe and do righteous deeds - We will admit them to gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they abide forever. For them therein are purified spouses, and We will admit them to deepening shade.

{وَجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَاعِمَةٌ لِسَعْيِهَا رَاضِيَةٌ فِي جَنَّةٍ عَالِيَةٍ لَا تَسْمَعُ فِيهَا لَافِيَةٌ فِيهَا عَيْنٌ جَارِيَةٌ فِيهَا سُرُرٌ مَرْفُوعَةٌ وَأَكْوَابٌ مَوْضُوعَةٌ وَنَمَارِقُ مَصْفُوفَةٌ وَزُرَّابِيُّ مَبْثُوثَةٌ} [الغاشية: 16-8]

[Other] faces, that Day, will show pleasure. With their effort [they are] satisfied. In an elevated

many of medieval Islam's aesthetic products, including tapestry, illuminated manuscripts and architecture (Fig. 59). Still, few studies today have yet coped with providing us with in-depth examinations of the effects of such metaphorical inferences on the medieval Islamic city's socio-urban discourses. The following sections will attempt to do so by firstly examining some of the most prominent Islamic urban centres founded by the Umayyads, the Abbasids and the Fatimids and later examining their social meaningfulness in relation to contemporaneous poetic and philosophic descriptions.

6.3.1 The Umayyads' Kairouan, Tunisia (670AD)

One of the earliest urban Islamic settlements during the rule of the Umayyad dynasty is the city of Kairouan in Tunisia, founded in 670AD by Caliph Mo'aweyyah ibn Abi Sufyan (602-680). The town's map shows a rectilinear development surrounded by a fortified wall, similar in its conception to that of Damascus, which was Mo'aweyyah's capital at the time. The city is approached through four gates, possibly denoting the four rivers of heaven. The city's grand mosque is situated on the eastern side, possibly suggesting the Muslim's favouritism of the right side (righteousness path) as opposed to the left. The Sūq Quarter of Kairouan is located at the heart of the city and extends towards the mosque through the main Street of Kairouan. Many Islamic travellers, historians and cartographers, such as al-Moqaddesi, claim that the city was a prestigious Islamic centre surrounded by a large mud wall, and that it had over fifteen large streets.⁴⁸⁴ Medieval historical records also tell of the natural abundance of Kairouan, as noted in al-Ya'qubi's account for instance.⁴⁸⁵ In this regard, al-Moqaddesi further explains that al-Moez (923-975 AD), the Fatimid ruler of the town, ordered the excavation of a water channel that transports water from the north towards the centre of the city, passing through his own palace so it can fill

garden. Wherein they will hear no unsuitable speech. Within it is a flowing spring. Within it are couches raised high. And cups put in place. And cushions lined up. And carpets spread around.

⁴⁸⁴ Al-Moqaddasi, *Ahsan al-Ta'asim fi Marifat al-Aqalim* (أحسن التقاسيم في معرفة الأقاليم), 224-226.

⁴⁸⁵ Al-Ya'qubi, *Al-buldan* (البلدان), 186.

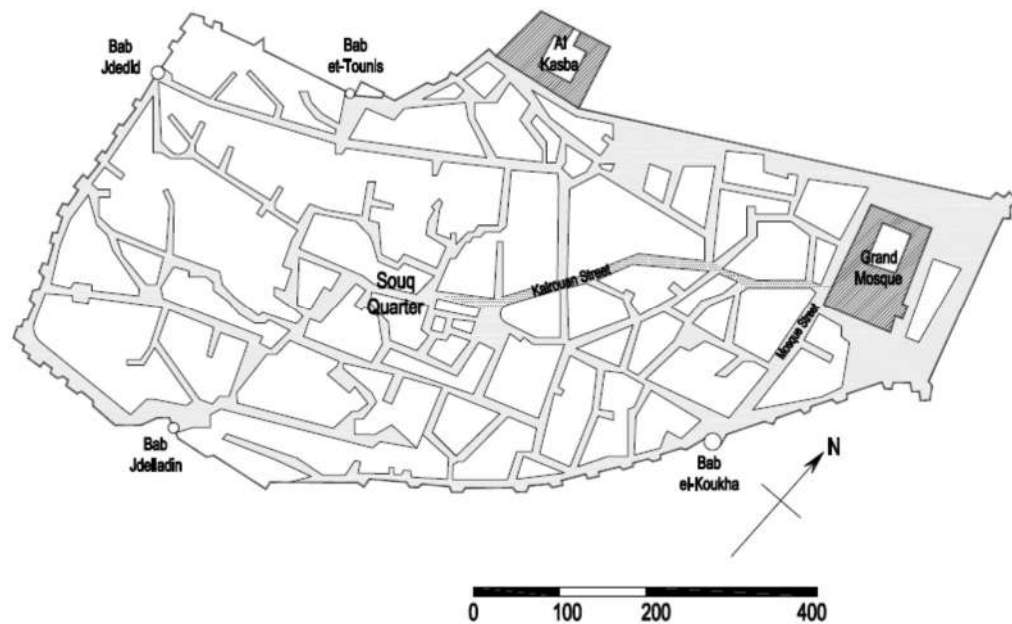


Figure 60 - Map of Kairouan Old Centre showing the city's gates, grand mosque, Sūq quarter and main streets. By author after 1916 map.

its fountains and pools.⁴⁸⁶ He also describes the city's many gates, its beautiful Sūqs and grand mosque. As an example of early Muslim towns, Kairouan shows affinity with some Pre-Islamic Arab towns through its layout, fortification, water system and the Sūq's central placement.

6.3.2 The Abbasids' Baghdad, Iraq (762AD)

Even though Kairouan's urban plan shows little variations from its Damascene predecessor, the Abbasid city of Baghdad, founded in 762 AD, presents itself as a milestone in Islamic urban planning, pointing to a possible change in the Islamic conceptualization of space. Such change can be ascribed to a multiplicity of reasons, chief among them is the advancement of scientific, theological and philosophical thinking during the Abbasid era, where urban strategies reflected not only some authoritarian 'acts of will,' but also some active 'acts of inhabitation.'⁴⁸⁷ Even though little of the original urban structure is present today because of its 13th century destruction by Mongol forces, historical

⁴⁸⁶ Al-Moqaddasi, *Ahsan al-Ta'asim fi Marifat al-Aqalim* (أحسن التقاسيم في معرفة الأقاليم), 225.

⁴⁸⁷ According to Edmond Bacon's *Design of Cities* (1967), cities are designed following an 'act of will,' in other words an authoritarian intent, such as that of rulers, architects, or planners, who decide the cities' major layout, including its physical orientation and movement systems.

records, illuminated manuscripts and travellers' journals provide detailed descriptions of the city. The following illustrated maps and illuminated manuscript provide a clear idea of the city's circular layout, its doors, central palace/mosque and market arcades. Like Aleppo and Kairouan, Baghdad was surrounded by a fortified wall encircled by a moat and a causeway, a design ordered by Caliph Abu Ja'far al-Mansour (714–775 AD) and executed by the finest builders in the Islamic realm, as described by al-Ya'qubi, when he states,

The city was designed with four gates, Bab al-Kufa, Bab al-Basra, Bab Khurasan, and Bab al-Sham [Damascus]; the distance between each gate and the other is five thousand black slave arms from outside the moat, and on every gate, there are two magnificently enormous doors that cannot be opened or closed without a group of men... On top of every outer gate there is a golden dome, surrounded by elevated seating areas, so he [Caliph al-Mansour] can sit and oversee the work in the city... Every gate leads to a long corridor, whose walls are covered with mortar and tiles, leading to the city's central court... In the middle of the plaza, there is the palace, whose door is called the Golden Door, and next to it [the palace] there is the mosque... The houses of the princes' surround al-Mansour's palace, as well as the Treasury, the Armory, the post diwan [office], the taxation diwan, the stamp diwan, the military diwan ...⁴⁸⁸

Al-Ya'qubi's account promulgates that Baghdad's circular plan is an essentially Abbasid innovation, ignoring not only some Sassanid precedents but also Hatra's ruins **that lie** 290km away from Baghdad.⁴⁸⁹ Even though al-Ya'qubi's descriptions of the city are possibly influenced by his Iraqi origin, medieval historian and traveller Yaqut al-Hamawi makes similar claims.⁴⁹⁰

According to al-Hamawi, whose travel diary probably describes the last decades of the city before its destruction, Baghdad was a grand Islamic state of multiple densely populated districts.⁴⁹¹ The manicured urban design attests to the Abbasid's urban sophistication at the time, with the wall, four gates, linear

⁴⁸⁸ Al-Ya'qubi, *Al-buldan* (البلدان), 24-25.

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid., 9.

⁴⁹⁰ Yaqut Al-Hamawi, *Mu'jam al-buldan* (معجم البلدان), Arabic (Beirut: Dar Sader, 1977), 1:457-467.

⁴⁹¹ Ibn Jubayr, *The Travels of ibn Jubayr*, 225 – 230.

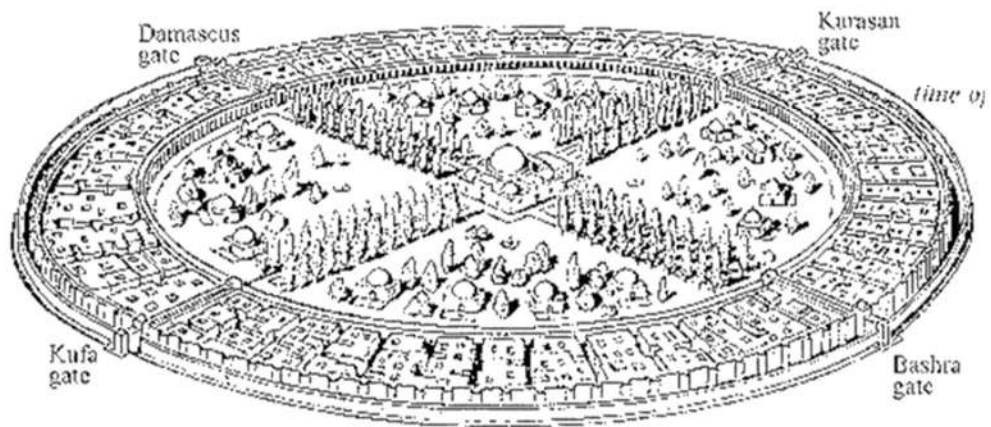
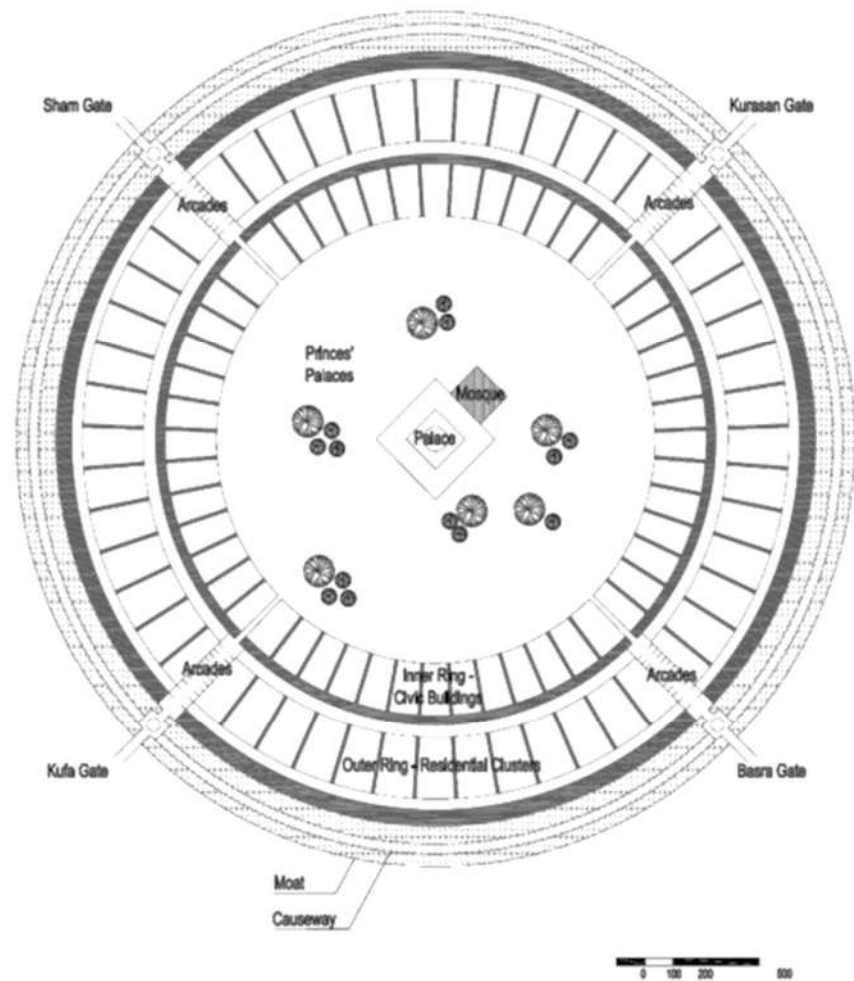


Figure 61 – Top, Baghdad Round Plan by author after two proposed scaled drawing. Bottom, Isometric View of Baghdad City with the four gates named according to their geographical location.



Figure 62 – Medieval illuminated manuscript (1258), showing Mongols sacking Baghdad.



Figure 63 – A view of one of the two "Iwans" overlooking the courtyard of the Abbasid Palace in Baghdad.

shopping arcades and central garden courtyard, suggesting a ‘scientific’ interpretation of the concept of paradise and the righteousness path leading to its uppermost heaven. Unlike contemporary interpretations, there is little mention in most of the era’s historical records of gender segregation, where urban divisions in Baghdad seem to be intending the isolation of governmental districts from those of commoners, resulting in what ibn Jubayr describes as the Caliphs’ ‘elegant confiscation’ behind gilded walls.⁴⁹² When describing the journey towards Bab al-Basra, he states,

*Baghdad, as previously noted, is composed of two sides, eastern and western, with the Tigris and Euphrates rivers dividing them ... As for the building of the eastern side, it comprises of seventeen districts, each being an independent town, with some having two, three or eight bathhouses. There are mosques used for Friday prayer; and the largest [of the towns] is Qarya, the one we landed at in a place called al-Muraba’a on the bank of Tigris near the bridge, where people cross with boats, so many boats that one cannot count. Because of the constant daily crossing here people are in a continuous journey, both men and women. It is usual [for Baghdad] to have two bridges, one near the Caliph’s palace and the other on top of it for the many commoners... And near al-Shari’a [a district] and the district of Bab al-Basra there is the illustrious Sūq of Maristan [hospital] overlooking Tigris river.*⁴⁹³

Similar to Ibn Jubayr’s above account, al-Ya’qubi states that the four main roads of Baghdad’s eastern side cross to form the main Sūq, starting from *Bab al-Nakhassin* (The Door of Slave market), where different shops flank both sides of the street then curve towards the Sūq of Cloth, which houses merchants from Khurasan.⁴⁹⁴ He further notes that the area of the market overlooking the river is the location of chicken vendors, behind which the houses of merchants and the city’s cosmopolitan residents are located. He also notes that the city’s residential

⁴⁹² Ibn Jubayr, *The Travels of ibn Jubayr*, 227.

⁴⁹³ Ibid., 225. This description also coincides with al-Hamawi’s historical account in the above cited book, page 460. Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

بغداد كما ذكرناه هي جانبان شرقي وغربي ودجلة والفرات بينهما... وأما عمارة الجانب الشرقي يحتوي على سبعة عشرة محلة كل محلة منها مدينة مستقلة وفي كل واحدة منها الحمامان والثلاثة و الثماني منها بجوامع يصلى فيها الجمعة فأكبرها القرية و هي التي نزلنا فيها بريض منها يعرف بالمربعة على شط دجلة بمقربة من الجسر فحملته دجلة بمدّها السبلي فعاد الناس يعبرون بالزوارق و الزوارق فيها لا تحصى كثرة فالناس ليلا ونهارا من تمادي العبور فيها في نزهة متصلة رجالا و نساء و العادة أن يكون لها جسران احدهما مما يقرب من دور الخليفة و الآخر فوقه لكرة الناس... و بين الشارع و محلة باب البصرة سوق مارستان الشهير ببغداد و هو على دجلة...

⁴⁹⁴ Al-Ya’qubi, *Al-buldan* (البلدان), 35.



Figure 64 - Illuminated manuscript of the Abbasid Caliph's court in Baghdad, from al-Hariri's book *Maqamat* painted by al-Wasiti in 1237.

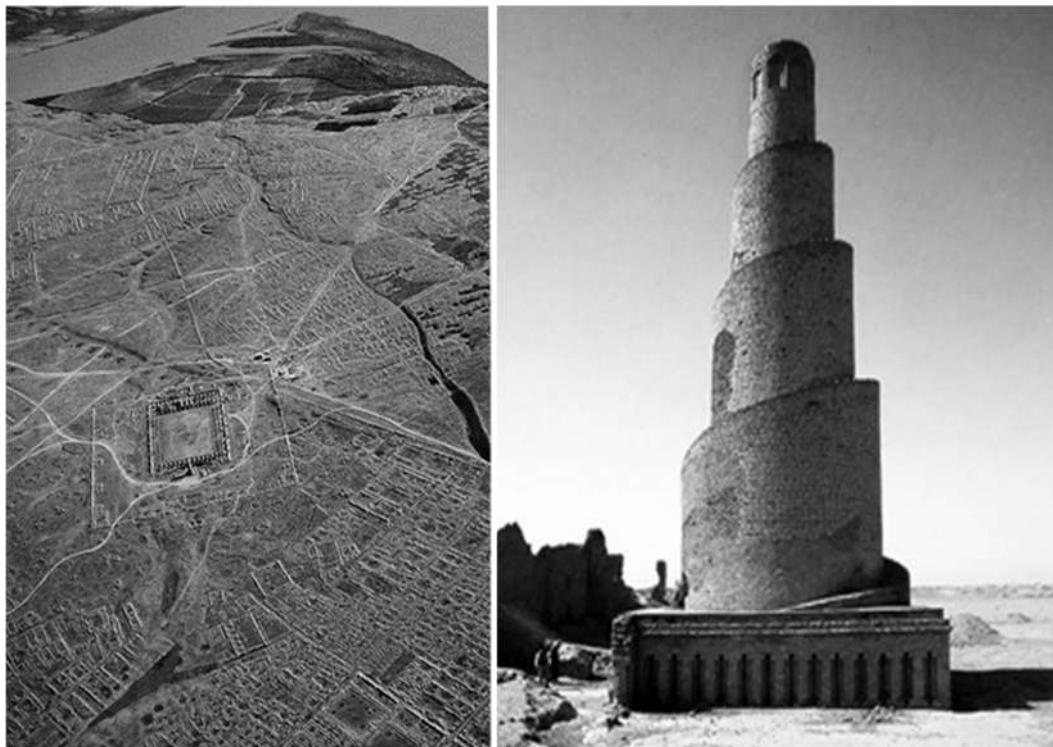


Figure 65 - Left, Map of Samarra with the mosque in the centre. Right, the minaret of Samarra's grand mosque.

streets were named after the nationality of its dwellers or the type of sold merchandise. Yet, al-Ya'qubi claims that these zoning strategies played some role in the socio-political instability of the city, leading to several riots and forcing the Caliphs to move their palatial residence from Baghdad to the nearby site of *Samarra* (سر من رأى).⁴⁹⁵ For, as described by al-Ya'qubi's and al-Hariri's satirical anecdotes titled *Maqamat* (originally written and illustrated in 1237AD), Baghdad's highly-dense multinational population was crushed towards the city's outer rings, leaving its inner circle fully dedicated to officials.⁴⁹⁶ Hence, al-Ya'qubi believed the city's circular plan and unequal social divisions to be problematic. These reasons possibly explain why the Abbasid's subsequent capital of *Samarra* abandoned Baghdad's circular model, granting the mosque a central position in town.⁴⁹⁷ Yet, al-Ya'qubi confirms that *Samarra*'s urban planning strategy was still based on ethnic and occupational segregation. While very little of this 'new' capital is currently present, the circular minaret of *Samarra*'s grand mosque is still erect, suggesting the centrality of the 'circle' in Abbasid architectural philosophy. This proposition can be further examined using another Abbasid town, like Zabid in Yemen, which was founded in 824 AD by emissary Mohammed ibn Ziyad.⁴⁹⁸

6.3.3 The Abbasids' Zabid, Yemen

Zabid, the capital of Yemen from 13th until the 15th century, was planned in a circular shape, surrounded by a fortified wall housing four main gates. Following the example set by Baghdad, each of the gates is named after its geographic position in relation to neighbouring Islamic states. By analysing the major city streets on the plan and its main junctions, the town's movement shaft suggests a similarity between Zabid's planning strategy and that of Baghdad. This

⁴⁹⁵ Al-Ya'qubi, *Al-buldan* (البلدان), 56. Al-Ya'qubi does not mention this in the main text, but he refers to it in footnote (1) of the same page and recounts the incidents that led Caliph al-Mu'tassem to move his capital.

⁴⁹⁶ Abu Mohammed Al-Hariri, *Maqamat al-Hariri* (Beirut: Matba'at al-Ma'aref, 1872), 129.

⁴⁹⁷ Ibid., 58.

⁴⁹⁸ Al-Hamawi, *Mu'jam al-buldan* (معجم البلدان), 2:132. It is important to note that Zabid is considered a UNESCO endangered heritage site since 1993, as explained by the UNESCO online reports <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/611/documents/>

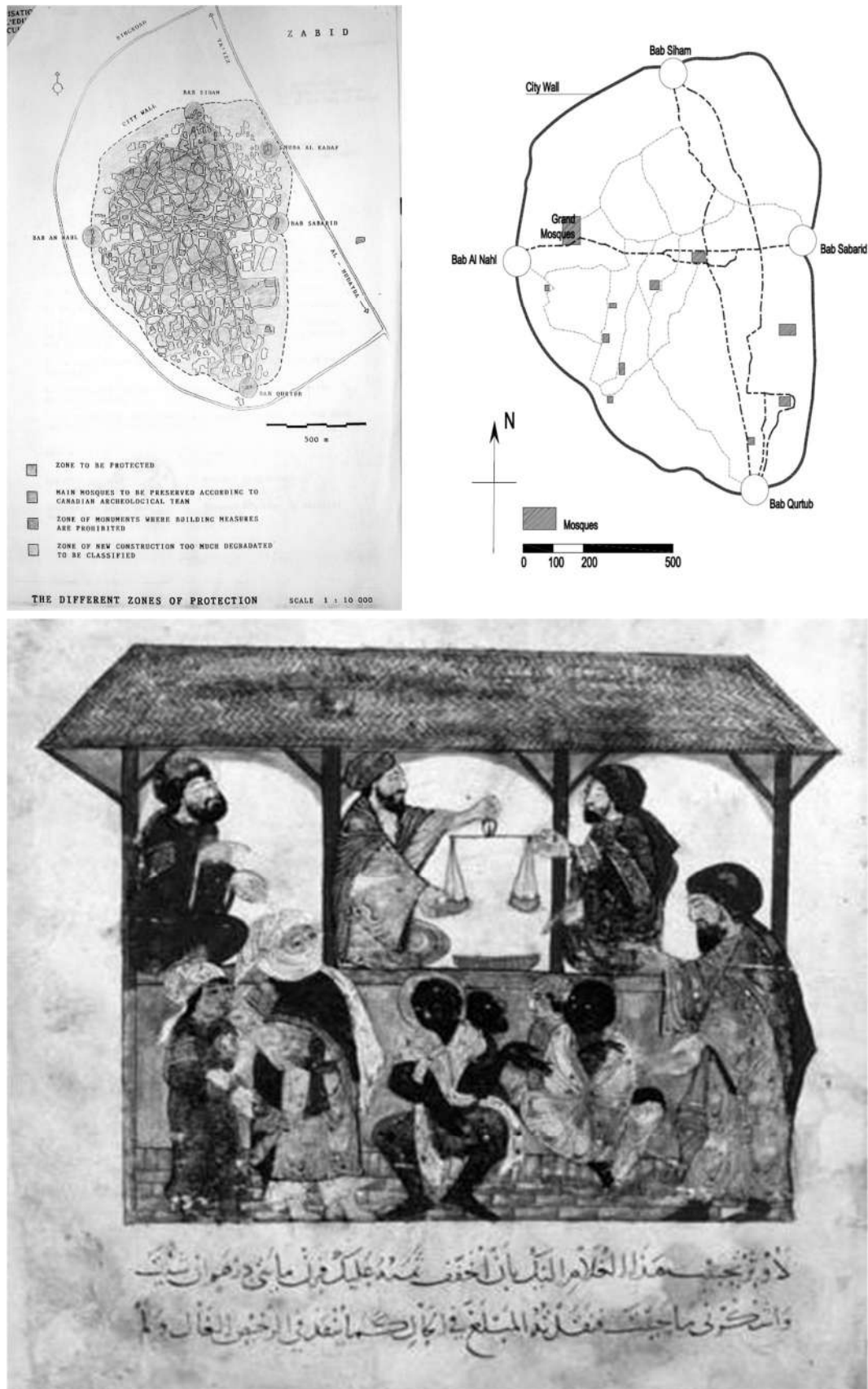


Figure 66 – Top Left, Plan of Zabid Historic site as per UNESCO 1993 Report "The Different Zones of Protection." Top Right, Proposal for Zabid's main movement shafts by author after UNESCO's original report. Bottom, Slave market in Zabid, Yemen, from the Maqamat of al-Hariri, illustrated by al-Wasiti (1237), Currently stored at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.



Figure 67 - Historic Gate and Civic Building in Zabid.

similarity is also manifest in the four gates that connect the city through two perpendicular routes, whose intersection was crowned by a Friday mosque called Al-Ashaer. Despite the site's current crude state, historic records, like that of al-Ya'qubi, describe Zabid as a cultural centre and knowledge hub, attracting scholars from all over the Islamic empire to its illustrious university.⁴⁹⁹ This is possibly explains why Zabid was described by al-Moqaddesi as a glamorous city, coining it 'the Baghdad of Yemen.'⁵⁰⁰ Aside from its beauty and cultural importance, Zabid was also depicted in al-Hariri's illustrated anecdotes (Fig. 66) as a pivotal mercantile centre, possibly due to its location in South East Yemen.⁵⁰¹ According to Omar Abdulaziz Hallaj, leader of the Urban Development and Heritage Conservation Project for Zabid,

the city originated around a small hill some 400 meters in diameter. At the centre of the hill stands now the al-Ashaer mosque. A review of the urban pattern around the mosque indicates a pattern of land tenure common to early Islamic cities known as "khitat" or tribal allocations. Eventually, the two main

⁴⁹⁹ Al-Ya'qubi, *Al-buldan* (البلدان), 58.

⁵⁰⁰ Al-Moqaddasi, *Ahsan al-Ta'asim fi Marifat al-Aqalim* (أحسن التقاسيم في معرفة الأقاليم), 84-86.

⁵⁰¹ Al-Hariri, *Maqamat al-Hariri*, 256-269.

*perpendicular streets meeting in front of the Ashaer mosque were extended to demarcate four main quarters.*⁵⁰²

Similar to other Islamic centres, such as Cairo for example, Zabid's urban structure witnessed waves of change and demolition, rendering it hard to assess today its original planning or the quality of its lived experience then. This observation leads us to the final example of Cairo, or *Al-Qahira*, founded in 969AD by the Fatimids' military commander Jawher al-Siqqili.

6.3.4 The Fatimids' Qahira, Egypt (969AD)

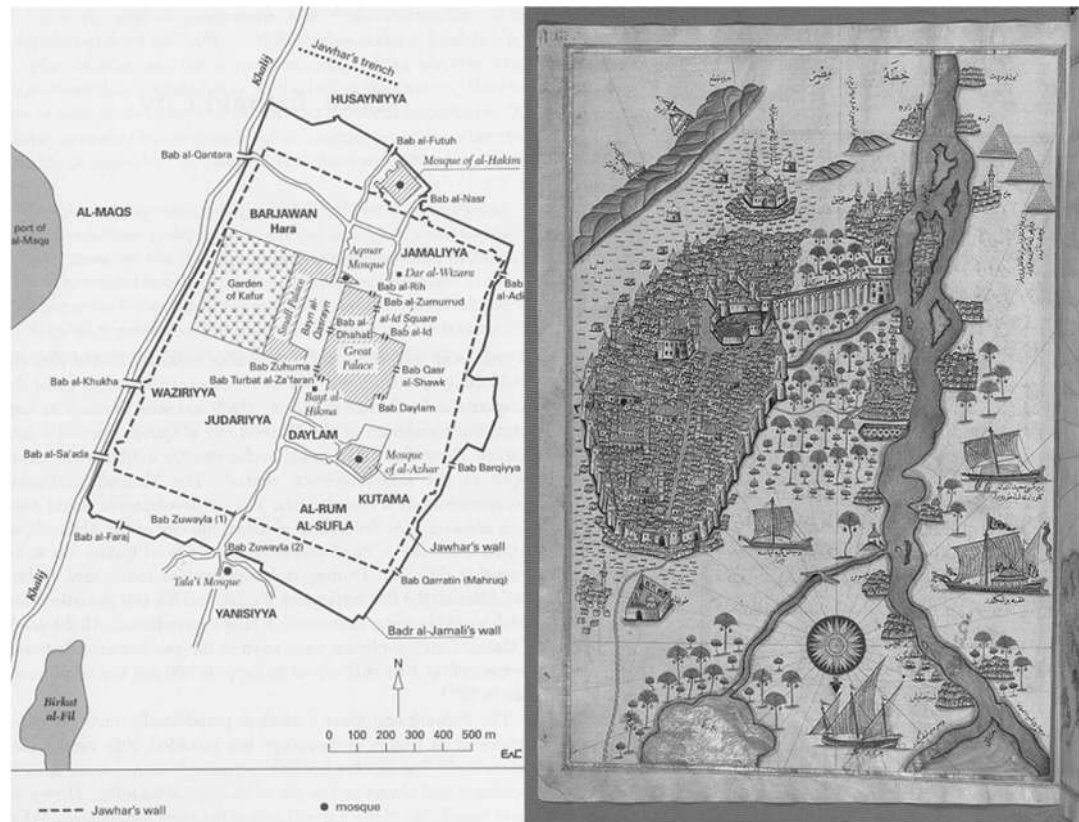
Al-Qahira was built as a fortified double-walled city, intended primarily for the protection of the Fatimid dynasty as much as for the effective segregation of the city's different economic and social classes. The various sectors were divided by gates, hence allowing the safe movement from one zone to the other. *Al-Qahira*'s plan is based on a rectangle, yet it still retains the idea of intersecting streets that connect the city horizontally and vertically. Unlike its older counterparts, *Al-Qahira*'s urban layering suggests the gradual proliferation of each quarter into a series of central mosques and surrounding Sūqs, a strategy that not only resulted in heavily congested zones, but possibly too multiplied the spiritual aptitude of the *Jannah* concept with its allegories of gates, paths, domes and hierarchies.⁵⁰³ According to al-Maqrizi's (1364-1442) historical records, the Fatimids planned *Al-Qahira* as a fortified centre built in close proximity to other Islamic towns in the area, such as those of *al-Fustat* and *al-Qatae'a* (Fig. 68).⁵⁰⁴ Yet, the first building to be planned in *al-Qahira* by Jawher al-Siqqili was that of the palace, which he divided into two separate buildings, intercepted by a huge

⁵⁰² "Conservation of the Historic City of Zabid in Yemen," *Historical Cities and Cultural Heritage* (February 7, 2009), <https://historicalcities.wordpress.com/2009/02/07/conservation-of-the-historic-city-of-zabid-in-yemen/> (accessed December 4, 2017).

⁵⁰³ For more information on the transformation of Cairo's Medieval urban plan, see Al-Gabarty's book (عجائب الآثار في التراجم والأخبار), originally written in 14th/15th century, and Al-Maqrizi's book (المواعظ والاعتبار بذكر الخطط والآثار - الخطط المقريزية) originally written in 13th/14th century and first published in 1854 at Cairo's Bolaq publishing house.

⁵⁰⁴ Al-Maqrizi, *Al-Mawa'edh wal i'tibar bi thikr al-khitat wal athar, or Al-khitat al-Maqriziyah* (المواعظ والاعتبار بذكر الخطط والآثار، أو الخطط المقريزية), Arabic (Cairo: Al-Hay-at al- 'Amah li Qosour al-Thaqafah, 2002), 2:373.

Figure 68 - Left – Map of Fatimid Cairo with the double fortification wall and gates. Right – Illuminated Manuscript Map of Cairo, from Book of Navigation, showing the Nile and its Delta, the Fatimid fortifications, and Pyramids.



square known as “*Bayn al-Qasrein*,” or in-between palaces.⁵⁰⁵ Maqrizi offers an extensively detailed description of the streets of *al-Qahira*, noting that the main street called “*Qassabat al-Qahira*,” or Cairo’s Spine, starts from the Gate of Zuweilah until *Bayn al-Qasrein*, reaching to Gate al-Khoronfosh, where the street branches to the right towards *Bab al-Eid* and *Bab al-Nasr* and to the left towards *Harat* (Small Street) *Borgouan* and *Bab al-Fotouh*.⁵⁰⁶ He further notes that to the right of *Bab Zuweilah* there is the street of *Khashabeen*, which houses the main prison, the men’s bath house and clothes’ shops or what he refers to as ‘*Qaiçaria* Emir Bahaa Eldien Raslan.’ He further describes that to left of *Bab Zuweilah* there are the market streets of *Haddadeen* (Blacksmiths), *Haggareen* (Stonemasons) and *Fahameen* (Coal workers). Here, there are also the leisure houses and the Mosque of Sam bin Nouh, which lies at the centre of the streets of

⁵⁰⁵ This area was the setting of Naguib Mahfouz’s novel that bears the same name of the street “*Bayn al-Qasrein*.”

⁵⁰⁶ Al-Maqrizi, *Al-Mawa’edh wal i’tibar bi thikr al-khitat wal athar, or Al-khitat al-Maqriziyah* (المواعظ و الاعتبار بذكر الخط والاثار، أو الخطط المقرية)، 2:94-100.

Gharabelyeen and *Manakheleyeen* (the names of which suggest grain and wheat grinders). Moving past *Bab Zuweilah*, al-Maqrizi describes the main shaft, which houses the Sūqs of *Sarragueen* (Tailors) and the Mosque of al-Dhafery, which itself forms the junction in the middle of the streets of *al-Qafasseen* (Basket weavers), *al-Toyour* (Poultry), *al-Haddadeen* (Blacksmiths) and *al-Warraqueen* (paper makers and bookstores). Further down the main spine, there are the Sūqs of *Halaweyeen* (sweets makers) and *Kahkeyeen* (biscuit makers), which precede the more refined Sūqs of *al-Attareen* (spice vendors), *al-Warraqin* (book vendors) and *Qaiçaria ibn Quraish* (Cloth vendors). This southernmost part of town, which ends at al-Azhar Mosque, is flanked by many cloth Sūqs. Approaching the town's fortification wall, there are more Sūq streets dedicated to vocational activities, such as welding, dying and forging.⁵⁰⁷ Al-Maqrizi offers many more details regarding the other paths of the city, all of which demonstrate that the medieval Islamic Sūq was not confined to a single dedicated quarter or building, but rather constituted the totality of the city's public space. Accordingly, it is possible to suggest that while the Islamic Sūq played the important urban role of segregating different classes, professions, sects and ethnic groups, its social significance was influenced by its residents' socio-cultural activities and ethnic backgrounds.

The above examples demonstrate how the Islamic town's design was initiated by its rulers' determinate 'acts of will,' where fortified towns were planned in response to some contemporaneous military, political, social, religious and economic needs. They also hinted at some different forms of social and cultural adaptations, explaining how these initial 'acts of will' have been gradually overridden by everyday 'acts of inhabitation.' For example, the demise of Baghdad and Samarra presents one of the different socio-political struggles characterising the era. Social adaptation is likewise apparent in the nomenclature of the different gates and districts of the Islamic town, acting as symbols of the city's different professional or ethnic communities and their relationship to each other. The case studies also suggest that while the Islamic cities' physical layout

⁵⁰⁷ Al-Maqrizi, *Al-Mawa'edh wal i'tibar bi thikr al-khitat wal athar, or Al-khitat al-Maqriziyah* (المواعظ و الاعتبار بذكر الخطط والآثار، أو الخطط المقرزية) 2:94-100.



Figure 69- Illustration from *Maqamat* of al-Hariri St. Petersburg manuscript C-23 of c. 1225-35 The wedding banquet at a beggar's mansion in Cairo.

seems to respond to the era's political, military, technological and economic limitations, they all seem to share some particular cultural symbols relating to the Quranic descriptions of paradise. These religious symbols are again implied in the nomenclature of some buildings, like the Green Dome and Golden Door of Baghdad, both of which relate directly to the Prophet's (PBUH) *hadith* (section 6.2). This is also deduced from the previously discussed historical narratives and travellers' journals, which describe military fortifications, like high walls, moats and causeways, as paradisiacal symbols of concealment; central courtyards and mosques as symbols of *al-Firdaws* that is reserved for the most pious; and city gates as heavenly doors that usher people—according to their deeds—to paradise's different levels. Looking at the different illustrations and maps, the case studies further suggest that these religious symbols were physically

transposed onto the Islamic city's urban layout. Here, the Sūqs' perpendicular intersections become symbols of the four rivers of heaven, acting as continuous passageways from and to the mosque. In this way, the medieval Islamic Sūq assumes the role of *Sirat al-Mustaqeem*, metaphorically connecting earth, Man's place of settlement or *qarar*, to the sky, his chief source of inspiration for *benaā*, and to Paradise or *Jannah*. The persistence of such 'mythic' interpretations throughout most of the case studies point to a particular symbolic universe that encircled medieval Islam's urban life. Since this interpretation suggests that a Muslim, both Arab and non-Arab, was not concerned with the physical appearance of the city alone but also with the spiritual connections it alludes to, the following will examine the development of such mythic narrative in Arabia and its effects on an Arab's understanding of being-in an Islamic space.

6.4 Language: Poetic Descriptions of an Islamic City

Despite the apparent congruence in the Islamic Sūqs' overall urban layouts and architectural expressions, the above case studies hint that there exists a distinct flair that shapes the experience of each one of them, owing to some political, economic and cultural differences. This is conferred from the bulk of historical descriptions, travellers' journals and poetry, which tell of the possible role played by motive and intention in influencing the authors' experiences. Examples include the different poetic descriptions of Baghdad then, each of which portray a different viewpoint. One such description is offered by Taher bin al-Mudhafer bin al-Khazen's (around 9th century) following verses,

*May God send his rainy clouds to a place in Baghdad between al-Khold [district], Karakh [district] and al-Jisr [bridge district] ... It is the beautiful town that has granted its people things that have not been gathered since we were in Cairo ... Tender air in moderation and good health, and water that is sweeter than wine ... And its Tigris [river] has two banks planned from one crown to the other and one palace to another ... Its ground is like musk, its water like silver, its pebbles like rubies and pearls.*⁵⁰⁸

⁵⁰⁸ Al-Khatib Al-Baghdady, *Tarikh Baghdad wa thoyouloho* (تاريخ بغداد و ذبيلها), Arabic, edited by Mustafa Abdulqader Atta (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al- 'Ilmiyah, 1996), 1:75. The verses appear in

Another positive description is offered by al-Mutanabbi's following verses, in which he praises Baghdad stating,

*Baghdad you are a remedy for sore eyes... Baghdad you are God's meeting place with all nations... I have been expelled from you, but I shall not say goodbye... Baghdad you are the antidote for a soul's illness... The sun you are for joyous trees... or a paradise of all the paradises that I know on earth*⁵⁰⁹

Opposingly, the following letter by Abdullah ibn al-Mo'ataz (861-908) critiques Baghdad and contrasts its ill setting to that of his beloved Samarra,

*I am writing from a town [Samarra], whose people God elevated and its walls He obliterated, you can see despair bespoken and the rope of hope broken... Still, despite its staleness she remains my adored residence, and my beloved home, its star is shining, its weather is clear, and its pebbles are jewels, and its breeze is perfumed, and its sand is strongly scented... Unlike your Baghdad's dirty sky, and boiling water and air, where the weather is sandy, and the ground is muddy...*⁵¹⁰

The above accounts, which provide different experiences of Baghdad during the 9th and early 10th centuries, suggest that the poets' personal experiences, motives and memories influenced the image of the city and therefore its interpretation. Such motives include deprivation of financial or literary status, feelings of estrangement due to deportation from home country, religious or sectarian biases, political conflicts and blackmail.⁵¹¹ This is expressed in many of al-Mutanabbi's

the writings of al-Baghdady, who wrote his historical account of the city in 1041 AD.

Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

سقى الله صوت الغاديات محلة... ببغداد بين الخلد والكرخ والجسر
هي البلدة الحسنة خصت لأهلها... بأشياء لم يجمعن مذ كن في مصر
هواء رقيق في اعتدال وصحة... وماء له طعم أذ من الخمر
ودجلتها شيطان قد نظما لنا... بتاج إلى تاج وقصر إلى قصر
تراها كمسك والمياه كفضة.. وحصباؤها مثل اليواقيت والدر

⁵⁰⁹ Al-Mutanabbi, “حبيبة القلب جاري الأسد في الأجم,” in *Diwan Al-Mutanabbi* (ديوان المتنبي), Arabic (Beirut: Dar Beirut, 1983), 483. Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

بغداد أنت شفاء العين من رمي... بغداد أنت لقاء الله بالألم
طردت منك لكن لا أودعك... بغداد أنت انبراء الروح من سقم
الشمس أنت فضاء الدوح مبتهج... أو جنة الجنات أرضها علمي

⁵¹⁰ Al-Hamawi, *Mu'jam al-buldan* (معجم البلدان), 3:178. Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

كثبت من بلدة قد أنهض الله سكانها وأقعد حيطانها، فشاهد اليأس فيها ينطق وحيل الرجاء فيها يقطع... على أنها وإن جفيت
معشوقة السكني، وحبيبة المثوى، كوكبها يقظان، وجوها عريان، وحصباؤها جوهر، ونسيمها معطر، وترابها أنقى... لا كبغدادكم
الوسخة السماء، الومدة الماء والهواء، جوها غبار، وأرضها خبار...

⁵¹¹ Mashour Al-Habbazi, “She'r Hijaa al-Mudon wal Aqaleem fi Zaman Horoub al-Firinja: Dirasa Mawdou'iyā (شعر هجاء المدن والأقاليم في زمن حروب الفرنجة: دراسة موضوعية),” *Majalat Jame'at al-Kods*

poetry, where he often attacked Egypt and its rulers. It also appears in the different poetic descriptions that criticize Damascus, like Alhassan ibn al-Safi's (died c. 1173AD) following verses,

*I will leave a dirty city of hated water and air... and I will expose
Damascus by the disasters that are committed by its own people.*⁵¹²

Through these readings, the Islamic city is removed from its religious cloak and is reinterpreted through language, uncovering ample connections with some particular historical events, social norms, religious dictums and political interferences. Looking at the Islamic town from this perspective reveals how the Islamic city's experience and its embodied meanings were not considered fixed, pure and simple, except when such meanings were politically or religiously deployed to provide people with a reassuring sense of solidarity and communal identity, in other words consolidating their understanding of togetherness as Muslims against other Muslims, Arabs or foreigners. The cross-examination of the city's physical structure and its variable poetic readings allows the emergence of many such meanings that attest to the temporal fluidity of personal experiences, which are partial, fleeting and resonant, establishing language as a mediator between what is fixed in our physical experience and what changes through personal affections or socio-urban negotiations. The following section will build on this proposition, cross-examining some urban/architectural artefacts of Islamic Arabia and their poetic descriptions. Through this examination, the purpose is to identify the different social, cultural, religious and political sub-structures that possibly contributed to an Arab's experience of Islamic Sūqs.

al-Maftouha lil Abhath wal Dirassat (مجلة جامعة القدس المفتوحة للأبحاث والدراسات), no. 19 (2010)
<http://elibrary.medi.u.edu.my/books/2016/MEDIU00163.pdf> (accessed May 21, 2018): 299-300.

⁵¹² Al-Habbazi, "She'r Hijaa al-Mudon wal Aqaleem fi Zaman Horoub al-Firinja: Dirasa Mawdou'iya (شعر هجاء المدن والأقاليم في زمن حروب الفرنجة: دراسة موضوعية)" 311. Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

لأرحلن مطيتي عن بلدة ... شعناء يكره ماؤها وهواؤها
ولأرمين دمشق غير محجف... بفواقر التبتست لها أبنائها

6.5 Lived Experience: Islamic Sūqs in-between *tajalli* and *al-wahm*

Following Gadamer's arguments on the comparability of visual and verbal arts as channels of historical truths, this section will suggest that, in addition to poetry, architecture too can provide access to the Islamic city's experience and to the range of socially-shared meanings that are embodied in its Sūqs. One such access is provided through the variable styles of calligraphic inscriptions (Fig. 70). On the one hand, these calligraphic decorations reinforce the importance of Arabic as mediator of Quranic 'truth.' On the other, their divergent styles suggest the socio-cultural diversity of the Islamic empire. This is traceable in the architectural calligraphy—or calligrams—of Damascus and Jerusalem, which adapted the mosaic patterns of their Byzantine and Early Christian heritage.⁵¹³ Similarly, the Fatimid calligrams and motifs of Cairo possibly derived their structural and decorative logic from the city's ancient Egyptian heritage, a practice that resulted in some of the most monumental Islamic architectural styles. This also applies to Ottoman architectural innovations, which show some affinity to Byzantine prototypes, remaining faithful to surface application with little need for the intricate stucco reliefs that were popular in Egypt, Morocco or Andalusia.

These examples reveal the double ontological relevance of Islamic calligraphy, being both linguistic and conceptual in nature.⁵¹⁴ On the one hand, architectural surfaces that housed these holy scripts played a mediating role between the written and perceived worlds of language, hence reversing the Islamic architectural expression from one of physical exteriority to one of spiritual interiority. On the other hand, these scriptures, which are essentially little beyond beautifully crafted lines, dots and letters, present themselves as a physical embodiment of *Allah*'s message, His presence and His divinity, hence sanctioning the divinity of the medium, here the architectural elements, and possibly too the urban setting as a whole. This interpretation, while insinuated in some of the previously discussed studies on Islamic urbanism (sections 1.2 and 4.3-4.6), finds

⁵¹³ Valérie Gonzalez, "The Double Ontology of Islamic Calligraphy: A Word-Image on a Folio from the Museum of Raqqada (Tunisia)," in *M. Uğur Derman, 65th Birthday Festschrift*, ed. Irvin Cemil Schick (Istanbul: Sabanci Üniversitesi, 2001), 313-340.

⁵¹⁴ Valérie Gonzalez, "The Double Ontology of Islamic Calligraphy," 313-314.

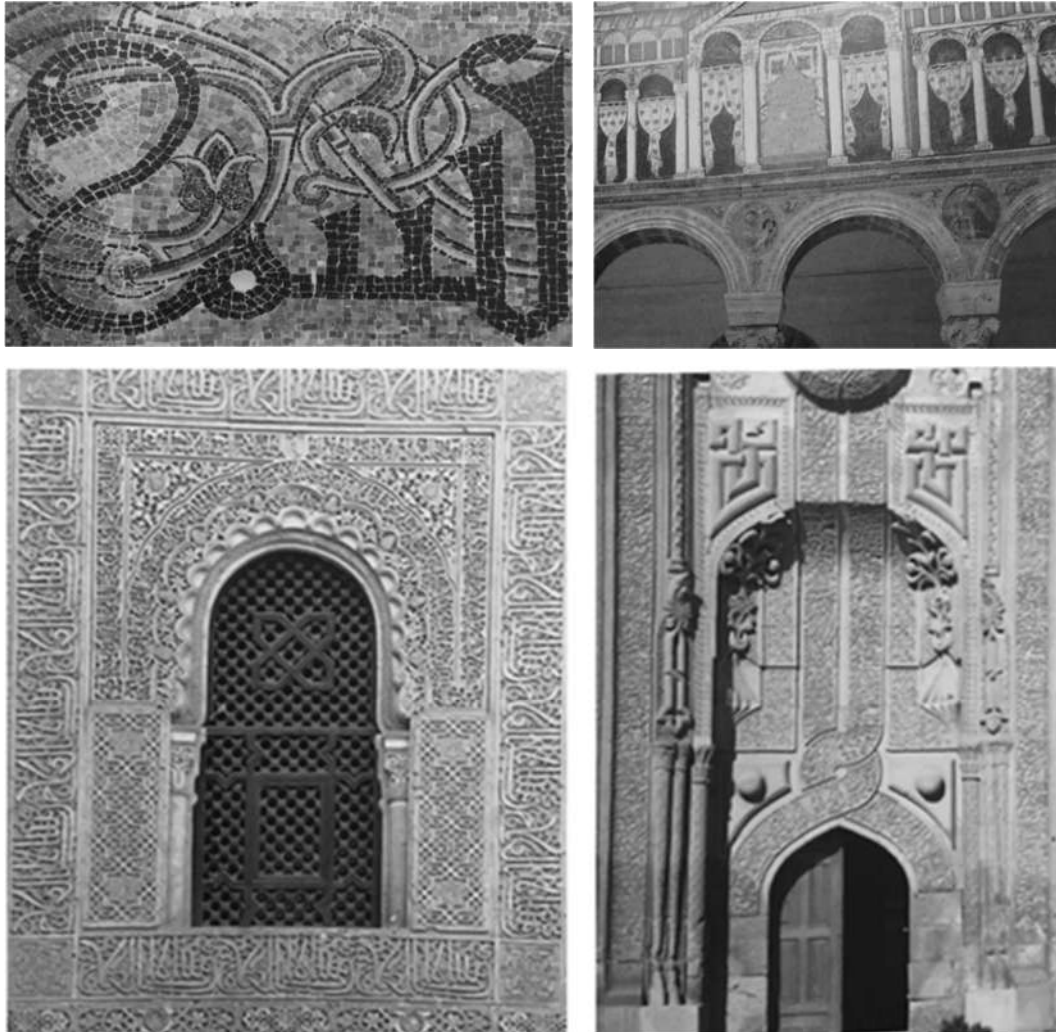


Figure 70 - Different Islamic Decorative Approaches in Damascus, Cairo, Istanbul, and Fez.

a reverberating echo in Titus Burckhardt's argument on the nature of Islamic art, which he describes as a form of 'aniconism' (as opposed to iconoclasm).⁵¹⁵ Here, Burckhardt argues that the Christian tradition of depicting deity through imagery is not necessarily the only means through which people can relate to the Divine, where Christian iconoclasm, possibly understood as "the exteriorization of a contemplative state," is counterpoised with a distinct expression in Islamic art that is based on the internalization of religious reflection in "a spiritual experience whose centre of gravity is the invisible."⁵¹⁶ He further argues that,

⁵¹⁵ Titus Burckhardt, "The Void in Islamic Art," *Studies in Comparative Religion*, no. 2 (1970), <http://www.studiesincomparativereligion.com/uploads/ArticlePDFs/133.pdf> (accessed Feb. 16, 2016).

⁵¹⁶ Titus Burckhardt, *Art of Islam: Language & Meaning* (Indiana: World Wisdom Inc., 2009), 29.

*... by excluding every image that could invite man to fix his mind on something outside himself and to project his soul in an "individualizing" form, it creates a void. In this respect the function of Islamic art is analogous to that of virgin nature, of the desert especially, which likewise favours contemplation, although from another point of view the order created by art is opposed to the chaos inherent in the nature of the desert.*⁵¹⁷

Burckhardt's statement suggests important links between Arabia's Pre-Islamic and Islamic poetic understanding of space. To test the possibility of such link, the following two sections will first examine the effects of the Sūq's experience in consolidating an Arab's understanding of Islam, using the viewpoints provided by Sufist philosophy and its opposing Orthodox stream. Afterwards, these views, along with the themes identified in the previous sections of this chapter, will be discussed, analysed and interpreted in relation to Arabia's Pre-Islamic and Islamic understanding of Sūq-ness.

6.5.1 The Islamic Sūq as a Sufist Journey

The previous discussions propose that the Sūq, as the city's chief public space, played a big role in establishing the basis of togetherness in Islamic Arabia. The previous case studies (section 6.3) and poetic descriptions (section 6.4) suggest that such togetherness is based on some shared understanding of Islam. To test the extent of such 'share-ability,' this section will explore some religious meanings that encircled, and possibly affected, the Sūq's daily social interactions. Sufist philosophy offers important insights here, conceptualizing the Sūq and its many places as a hierarchy of spiritual stations, or *Maqamat* (مقامات), that range from the mostly tarnished to the highly purified. This analogy permeates much Sufist poetry, such as Mahmud Shabastari's (1288-1340) following verses,

*Go sweep out the chamber of your heart,
Make it ready to be the dwelling-place of the beloved.
When you depart out, He will enter in,
In you, void of yourself, will he display his beauty.
The ideal man is loved for his pious works,
He finds an abode in a "laudable station"
He finds a portion of what eye hath not seen, nor ear heard.*

⁵¹⁷ Burckhardt, *Art of Islam*, 31.

*Until you cast away obstacles from before you,
 The light enters not the chamber of your heart.
 As there are four obstacles in this world,
 So also, the modes of purifications from them are four:
 First purification from filthiness of the flesh;
 Second, from sin and evil whispers of the temper;
 The third is the purification from bad habits,
 Which make men as beasts of the field;
 The fourth is the purification of secret,
 For at this point the pilgrim's journeyings cease.
 Who is cleansed with these purifications,
 Verify he is fit to commune with God.⁵¹⁸*

Here, Shabastari is describing the path of what could be referred to as spiritual ablution. The conditions and rewards he sets in relation to this cleansing journey resemble to a great extent many of the previously discussed paradisiacal descriptions of Islamic cities (section 6.3.1-6.3.4). There also exists some affinity between his definitions of 'worldly obstacles' and the dictations of the Islamic Law of Building (section 4.6). This leads us to assume that the Sufist perception of this spiritual procession is influenced by the physical layout of an Islamic city and its Sūqs, whose tangled pathways usually lead to the mosque (section 6.3). This assumption grants the phenomenon of the Sūq a different level of visibility, questioning again some Orientalist conclusions that propagate that the Quranic descriptions of paradise have been applied rather mechanically onto the Islamic city's physical structure. For, what this falsely suggests that individual contemplations and social negotiations exert little effect on the interpretation of holy scriptures and people's daily lived experiences. Contrastingly, Shabastari's poem, as well as the previously discussed calligraphic styles, point to the critical role played by reflection, participation and experience in the process of rehabilitating a Muslim's, both Arab and non-Arab, past tradition in line with the dictations, needs and aspirations of the Islamic situation. Such tactics possibly allowed a Muslim to implement his/her understanding of the Quranic idea of earth (section 6.2.2), as a place of human settlement or *qarar*, exploring the nature and limitations of his/her being-as-humans in relation to other humans and the world

⁵¹⁸ Mahmoud Shabastari, *Galshan-i Raz*, translated by E. H. Whinfield (London: Trubner and Co., 1880), 14 – 15.

around him/her. The bulk of literary, scientific and philosophical knowledge produced at the time supports such proposition (sections 6.5.1-6.5.2). Similarly, the Quranic idea of the sky as a place of building or *benaā*, encouraged Muslim thinkers to explore the wider celestial horizons for clues not only to expand their understanding of *Allah*'s heavenly messages but also to create some meaningful architectural and urban expressions. This explains why concepts such as sun, moon, geometry, stars, light, shadow and rotation took precedence in many of Islam's architectural and poetic spatial references. In Islamic Arabia, this view possibly played some role in displacing the meaning of the Pre-Islamic *fadaā* from its earlier dependence on the desert to the sky as a chief space of revelation. This is best portrayed in Ibn al-Shibl al-Baghdadi's (died c. 1071AD) following verses, where he questions,

*In the name of God, I ask you orbiting universe... Is there a reason for your path or you are forced to... Tell us why you take such orbit ... for we are amazed and cannot understand you... For, we see in you space [fadaā], so is there a space [fadaā] other than this space [fadaā] moving you? ... And, to you the souls are elevated or, do they remain with their bodies to decay?*⁵¹⁹

Al-Baghdadi's verses suggest that for Islamic Arabia, the sky, including its visible objects (stars) and invisible phenomena (angles), become symbols of Divine truth; while earth, including its visible elements (mountains, seas, animals and humans) and invisible phenomena (*Djinn* and *Shaitan*) remain symbols of illusion, evil and decay. The role of the Sūq in this spiritual *fadaā* is possibly parallel to al-Baghdadi's celestial orbit, organizing these symbols and exposing them through variable poetic, philosophic and architectural discourses. This possibly granted a Muslim Arab different paths for understanding his/her being in an Islamic space. One such path is that of the Islamic Sūq, whose urban layout seems not only concerned with the physical positioning of shops in relation to the

⁵¹⁹ Ibn Al-Shibl Al-Baghdadi, "بربك أيها الفلك المدار," in *Tareekh al-adab al-Arabi* (تاريخ الأدب العربي), 5th ed., by Omar Faroukh (Beirut: AL-'Ilm Lil Malayeen, 1989), 3:191-195. Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

بربك أيها الفلك المدار ... أقصد ذا المسير أم اضطرار
مدارك قل لنا في أي شيء ... ففي أفهامنا منك ابتهار
وفيك نرى الفضاء وهل فضاء ... سوى هذا الفضاء به تدار
وعندك ترفع الأرواح أم هل ... مع الأجساد يدركها النوار

mosque alone but also with some spiritual meanings relating to the idea of stations or *Maqamat*, a concept encircling many of Islamic Arabia's aesthetic products, including al-Hariri's previously mentioned anecdotes, the composition of musical tones and the development of Sufist philosophy.⁵²⁰ The idea of the *Maqamat* presents itself as integral constituents in Sufist tradition, explaining the relationship between Man-God-Cosmos as a network of "stations of ascent on the path to God."⁵²¹ In many of his writings, Ibn-Arabi argues that God makes himself known to Man through constant reflection/revelation of his many names, a unique gift that is bestowed on those whose hearts are as pure as a mirror.⁵²² He further argues that "Creation is essentially a theophany (*tajalli*) ... [therefore] man's Active Imagination (*takhayyul mutlaq*) is merely the organ of the absolute theophanic imagination."⁵²³ Still, for Ibn Arabi, Divine truth, which is absolute and eternal, cannot be understood except through Man's in-time experiences and this Man's ability to imaginatively interpret the meaning of what is revealed. Accordingly, Ibn Arabi believes that God communicates symbolically through some in-time phenomena, establishing an understanding of Him through daily experiences.⁵²⁴

While this idea has been examined through a multitude of philosophic discourses, including both Sufist and Orthodox, its application in Islamic Arabia's urban/architectural vocabulary depended on the incorporation of some particular symbols that point to *Allah's* Beautiful Names. One such symbol is that of the circle (section 6.3.2 and 6.3.3), repeatedly seen in the design of domes, squares, golden ratios, decorative elements and motifs, symbolizing *Allah's* name *al-Samad* (the Eternal), thus His infinite presence in the universe. Moreover, the repetition of this geometric symbol points to the harmony and infinity of Divine presence, and in turn to the possibility of His revelation, or *tajalli*, as *al-Basit* (the

⁵²⁰ In music, the concept of *Maqamat* refers to the different major and minor scales used to guide musical composition.

⁵²¹ William C. Chittick, *Sufism: A Beginners' Guide* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2000), 27.

⁵²² Mohamed Haj Yousef, *Ibn Arabi: Time and Cosmology* (London: Routledge, 2008), 33.

⁵²³ Yousef, *Ibn Arabi*, 182.

⁵²⁴ *Ibid.*, 29.

Expander) and *al-Wasse'a* (the All- Embracing). The Islamic city's layout suggests such interpretation, revealing a humanistic approach to building, where,

*moving within the three-dimensional mass of the city, active, positive spaces interact with negative, passive shapes. Through the use of geometry and mathematics, a vital positive space carves a hierarchy of negative, geometric volumes through which the soul of the city flows like a river that has furrowed channels in the crust of the earth. The spaces carved out are pristine, symmetrical, and ordered. The order is like that of crystalline particles polarized by a magnet. In the traditional city, the magnet is the linear movement system of the bazaar, and the particles are shops, caravanserais, madaris, mosques, and bathhouses.*⁵²⁵

The above presents the Islamic Sūq as a series of temporal events that are ordered around simultaneous acts of '*tajalli*.' This idea can be further elucidated through those architectural elements that amplify the spiritual interplay between light/darkness. Many Islamic philosophers, including al-Ghazali and Ibn Arabi, believe that the concept of light transcends physical sensation, pointing to *Allah's* infinite presence. Such understanding is based on many Quranic verses, like,

*Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The example of His light is like a niche within which is a lamp, the lamp is within glass, the glass as if it were a pearly [white] star lit from [the oil of] a blessed olive tree, neither of the east nor of the west, whose oil would almost glow even if untouched by fire. Light upon light. Allah guides to His light whom He wills. And Allah presents examples for the people, and Allah is Knowing of all things.*⁵²⁶

Al-Ghazali's Orthodox interpretation of the above verse reveals important dimensions of the Islamic *fadaā* and the different symbols it embodies. In this regard, he explains that light relates directly to the appearance of something to someone and therefore the act of seeing encompasses three parameters,

*(1) that which by itself is not visible, as dark bodies; (2) that which is by itself visible, but cannot make visible anything else, such as luminaries like the stars, and fire before it blazes up; (3) that which is by itself visible, and also makes visible, like the sun and the moon, and fire when it blazes up, and lamps.*⁵²⁷

⁵²⁵ Nader Ardalan and Laleh Bakhtiar, *The Sense of Unity: The Sufi Tradition in Persian Architecture* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1973), 17.

⁵²⁶ Quran (*al-Nour*) 24:35. English translation <http://quran.com/24> (accessed May 11, 2016).

⁵²⁷ Al-Ghazali, *The Mishkat Al-Anwar: The Niche for Lights*, translated by W.H.T. Gairdner (New York: Cosimo Classics, 2010), 46.

Still, al-Ghazali argues that given the limitations of physical perception, the eye needs the faculty of reason, or intelligence, in order to understand the reality of things beyond their superficial appearance.⁵²⁸ This intellectual faculty is in itself a form of internal light, infused into the human soul by *Allah*, whose description in the Quran as Light is not referring to something that acquires its luminosity from an external source, but points at some religious belief that He himself is “luminous [and is] illuminating all else beside.”⁵²⁹ This suggests that one of the main objectives of Islamic architecture was to imaginatively capture the essence of divine beauty/light and to re-incarnate it into sensible forms. In this process, imagination plays the dual role of collecting, modifying and negotiating previously acquired images or memories, then translating them in relation to some social, cultural and religious ideals. An examination of some architectural applications would help in portraying whether and how such understanding is shared among the different cultural communities of Islamic Arabia.

One example is found in the mosques’ niche or *mihrab*, a cove-like structure at the centre of the mosque wall towards which Muslims direct themselves for prayer. Fig. 72 shows two different applications of the idea. First, the niche of Mausoleum of Moulay Ismail in Meknes is framed by a calligraphic reference to God’s greatness, acting as a constant reminder of God’s power. Contrastingly, the niche of the Aqmar Mosque in Cairo employs an indirect technique of juxtaposing a calligraphic statement of the Islamic testimony or (*shahada*) onto a masonry lace structure shaped in the form of the star, declaring *Allah*’s One-ness. While the physical effects of each application differ in terms of experience, the linguistic allegory remains similar. Even though most of these niches are confined within the physical boundaries of the mosque, their physical protrusion on the exterior of mosques, hence easily visible in the Sūqs, allow the re-enactment of the primary idea of light and niche in the minds of passers-by. Here, the niche plays a double mediating role depending on its architectural

⁵²⁸ This interpretation also comes in proximity to Ibn Arabi’s idea of the heart as an ‘inward eye,’ a concept that is deeply rooted in Islamic philosophy.

⁵²⁹ Al-Ghazali, *The Mishkat Al-Anwar*, 57-58.

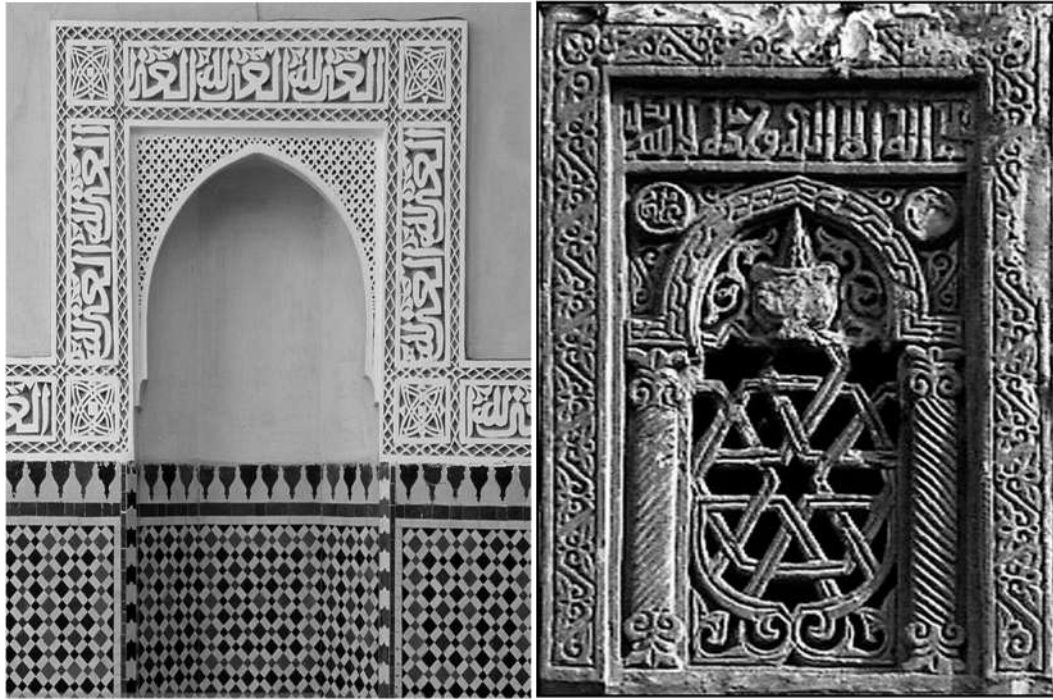


Figure 72 – Left, Niche at the Mausoleum of Moulay Ismail, Meknes Morocco. Right, Niche at al-Aqmar Mosque, Cairo, Egypt.



Figure 73 - Laced windows of Barqooq Mosque as seen from al-Moez street, Cairo.

situation. On the inside, the niche allows the transformation of light into a sign of Divine presence, whereas on the outside its dark shadows possibly symbolise the veils covering the hearts of those who fail to seek the *tareeq* to *Allah*. Similarly, geometric designs, such as those seen on *mashrabeyas* or glass lanterns, reflect the concept of *Allah*'s light, where the infinite configuration of patterns symbolizes *Allah*'s ever-presence. The perception and experience of light through these different architectural applications reinforce the meaningfulness of Quranic symbols and consolidate them into a plethora of shared *ethos*.

These symbols seem to have influenced the Islamic city's urban layering strategies as well, connoting not a preoccupation with social/gender seclusion alone but possibly also serving as tools for amplifying one's experience of light through the exaggeration of darkness. In this way, the experience of Islamic Sūqs become filled with meaningful temporal events, moving through the dark alleys and the secluded *cul-de-sacs*, then crawling slowly into the partly lit public spaces of the Sūqs. The repetitive archways intercepted by layers of architectural decorations, capture the light, reflect it and then swiftly recede back to darkness. The recurrent experience of these polarities, as one form of divine '*tajalli*,' seem to present themselves as tools for understanding other Quranic metaphors, like,

*Or [they are] like darknesses within an unfathomable sea which is covered by waves, upon which are waves, over which are clouds - darknesses, some of them upon others. When one puts out his hand[therein], he can hardly see it. And he to whom Allah has not granted light - for him there is no light.*⁵³⁰

In this way, the Islamic Sūq's experience mediates between the visible and invisible, transmitting different forms of knowledge from one place to the other. This is expressed in al-Imam al-Shafei's following verse, which argues not only for the elevated status of religious knowledge but also for the importance of applying it to everyday situations, including those encountered in Sūqs,

*My knowledge is with whenever I go it benefits me... my heart is its open vessel not a locked box ... If I am at home, knowledge is in it with me... and if I am in the Sūq then knowledge is in the Sūq.*⁵³¹

⁵³⁰ Quran (*al-Nour*) 24:40, English translation, <http://quran.com/24> (accessed May 11, 2016).

⁵³¹ Al Imam Mohammed bin Idris al-Shafi'i, *Diwan al-Imam al-Shafi'i*, edited by Mohammed Ibrahim Salim (Cairo: Ibn Sina Library, 2008), 112. Translation by author. Original Arabic text:



Figure 74 – Left, light fixture in Aleppo's Old Sūq bearing calligraphic versus of Surat *al-Nour*. Right, *mashrabeya* Ahmed bin Tulun Mosque.

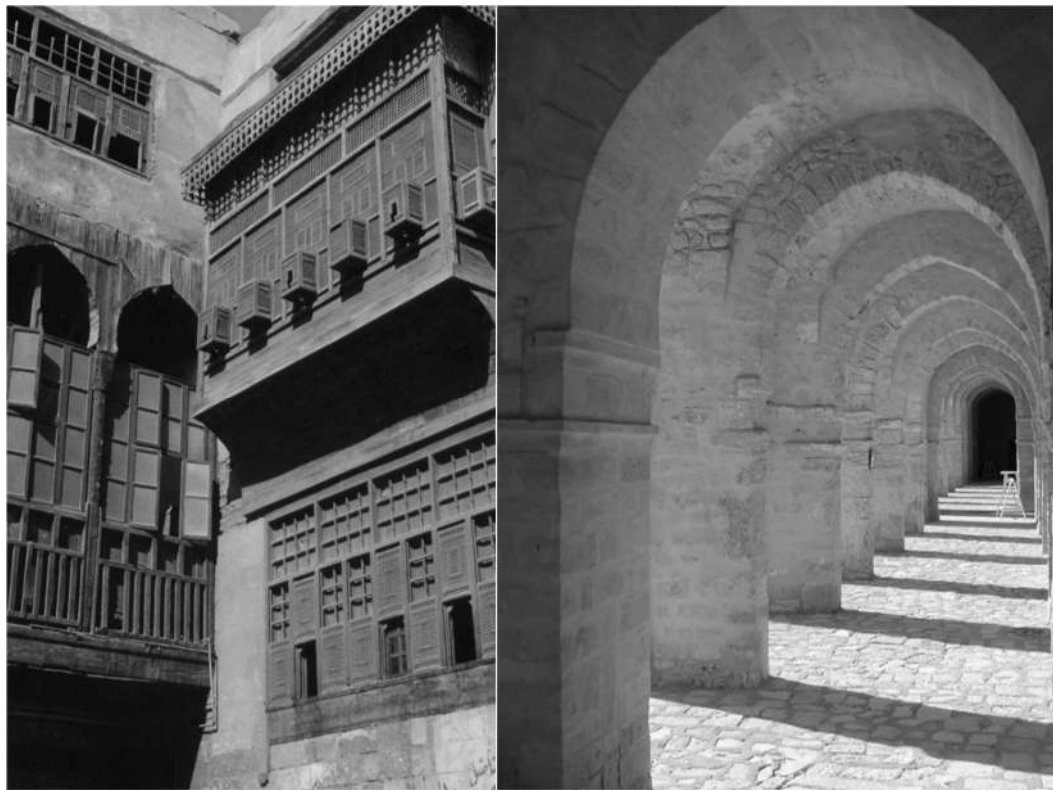


Figure 75 - Left, Mamluk windows in Cairo, Egypt. Right, archway at Mahdiya Mosque in Tunisia.

علمي معي حَيْثُمَا يَمَّمْتُ يَنْفَعْنِي ... قَلْبِي وَعَاءٌ لَهُ لَا بَطْنُ صُنْدُوقٍ
إِنْ كُنْتُ فِي الْبَيْتِ كَانَ الْعِلْمُ فِيهِ مَعِي ... أَوْ كُنْتُ فِي السُّوقِ كَانَ الْعِلْمُ فِي السُّوقِ

6.5.2 The Islamic Sūq as a Political Playground

In contrast to the ‘utopian’ Sufist outlook described above, the duality of light /darkness in Islamic architecture was politically employed to instate a particular interpretation of Islam over others.⁵³² One architectural example of such political deployment is the *Muqarnas*, a pioneering technique innovated by Muslim builders to resolve the problems of dome construction through the creation of layers of squinches that capture the light and diffuse it into a gradation of geometrical relationships. According to Yasser Tabbaa, the *Muqarnas* has been formulated in Baghdad in the early 11th century by the Sunni Muslim architect/mathematician al-Baqillani (950-1013), reflecting his ‘atomist-occasionalist’ views on the creation of the universe, where the design of domes is,

*to be divided into small but distinct units arranged in a complex manner, and (like the universe) supported and kept whole by the will of God – thus the deemphasis of the squinches, clearly the work of man, a feature common to all muqarnas domes.*⁵³³

In contrast to the dome’s Sufist symbolism, which points directly to *Allah*’s names of *al-Qader* (the Able) and *al-Khaleq* (the Creator), *Muqarnas* design evolved in different regions of the Islamic world to propagate some orthodox and political meanings. One such meaning relates to some scientific interpretations of the Quranic descriptions of the sun/moon rotation, as well as some established *Ash’ari* doctrines, “that shape, colour and luminosity are accidents which by definition are subject to continuous change according to the will of God.”⁵³⁴ Many such orthodox interpretations, which were supported by the Abbasid Caliphate then, resulted in the confinement of the Islamic *fadaā* to religious text and the abolishment of philosophy from Islamic discourse. This led to many reprimands on theological, philosophic and architectural levels, as criticized by Averroes (1126-1198AD).⁵³⁵ Yet, the spread of *Muqarnas* design from Baghdad

⁵³² Yasser Tabbaa, “The Muqarnas Dome: Its Origin and Meaning,” *Muqarnas* 3 (1985): 61-74.

⁵³³ Tabbaa, “The Muqarnas Dome,” 71.

⁵³⁴ Ibid., 72.

⁵³⁵ Averroes’s books, such as *On the Harmony of Religion and Philosophy*, translated by Georges Fadlo Hourani (1960), and *The Incoherence of the Incoherence*, translated by Simon van den Bergh (1954), present important treatises that defend the possibility of merging philosophy with Islamic theology, hence opposing al-Ghazali’s Ash’arite condemnations of philosophy.

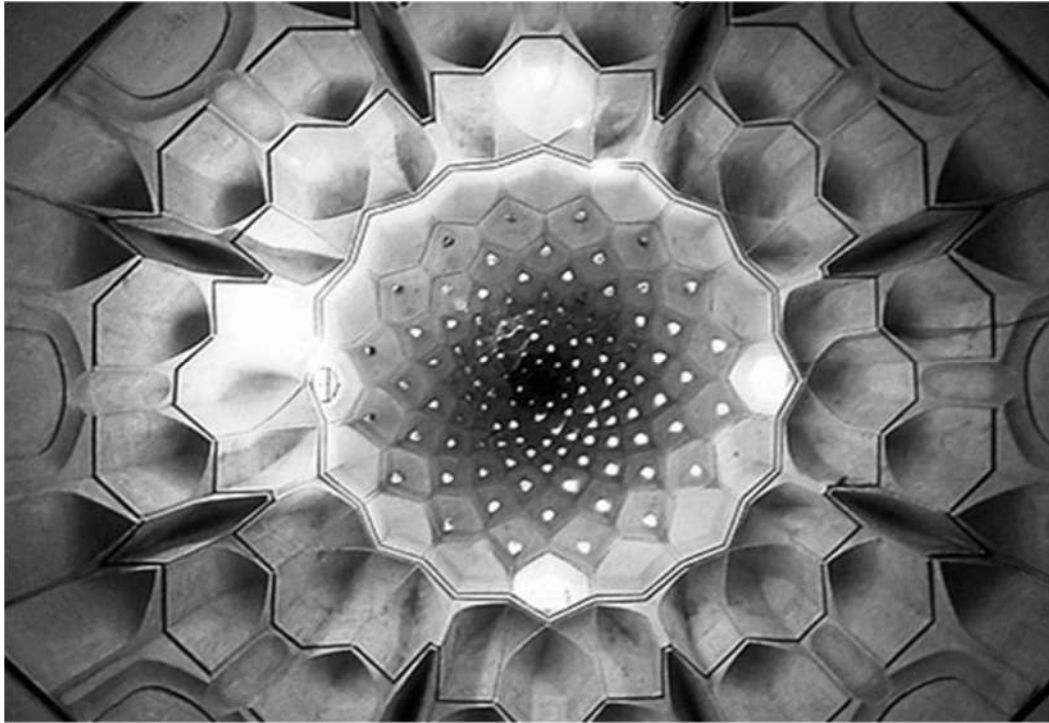


Figure 76 - Dome of the tomb of Sitt Zubaida, Baghdad, Iraq.

to Syria, and then to North Africa beholds much deeper insinuations, as proposed by Tabbaa's following argument,

*on the religious level, the muqarnas dome was adopted by the rising Sunni forces of Syria and North Africa ... Doubtless it was used with full awareness of its theological associations ... On the political level, the muqarnas dome provided a formal link with the Abbasid caliphate, the heartland of orthodoxy and source of legitimating.*⁵³⁶

Moreover, the spreading use of *Muqarnas* domes in many Islamic urban structures, like *hammams*, palaces and vaulted Sūqs refers to another *Ash'arite* interpretation of the sky as an all-encompassing veil or the Divine throne.⁵³⁷

Again, such interpretation beholds many religious and political implications. On a religious level, the presence of *Muqarnas* domes pointed beyond itself to the hegemony of some Sunni interpretations regarding *Allah's* power, justice and

⁵³⁶ Tabbaa, "The Muqarnas Dome," 72.

⁵³⁷ There are many Quranic verses and hadiths that attest to this interpretation. One Quranic description of the sky as the Divine throne is found in Surat al-Araf, verse 54, stating: *Indeed, your Lord is Allah, who created the heavens and earth in six days and then established Himself above the Throne. He covers the night with the day, [another night] chasing it rapidly; and [He created] the sun, the moon, and the stars, subjected by His command. Unquestionably, His is the creation and the command; blessed is Allah, Lord of the worlds.*

eternal Light, which is believed to symbolize “a light-conductor, which keeps that light from being out by gusts of wind.”⁵³⁸ On a political level, the dome became not only a symbol of *Allah*’s infinite light but also his infinite shadow. Since many orthodox Islamic scholars consider the *Caliph* (or ruler) as ‘*Allah*’s shadow on earth,’ the dome’s symbolic significance extends then to include the ruler as an in-time reflection of *Allah*’s eternal justice, elevating the ruler to a precariously sacred level.⁵³⁹ This possibly explains some prevailing orthodox beliefs today that a fundamental aspect of Islam rests on the unwavering obedience to the ruler and that “politics and thought are religious; religion was one and permitted no divergence.”⁵⁴⁰ The previous case studies support such view, shedding light on the nature of being in an Islamic space, where an understanding of being human curtains not only understanding the limits of such humanity in relation to divinity but also assumes a hierarchy of spiritual levels—*Maqamat*—that are spread over an imaginary sacred scale. An examination of further architectural examples would assist in elucidating the effects of these interpretations on the Islamic city’s experience. These examples would also assist in identifying the different routes through which such religious and political interpretations have been socially negotiated through urban experience. Given the politically driven nature of such discourse, the following will make use of the Umayyad/Abbasid political rivalry as the historical backdrop of the discussion.

The case studies (sections 6.3.1-6.3.3) portrayed that both political bodies used Quranic imagery to establish the Islamic city’s spiritual connection to the sky, through which the religiously mediated image of the *Caliph*, as *Allah*’s deputy or shadow on earth, is reinforced. Architecturally, this was probably best portrayed through the arch/column design of different Umayyad/Abbasid

⁵³⁸ Al-Ghazali, *The Mishkat Al-Anwar*, 79.

⁵³⁹ This understanding is based on one of the Prophet’s (PBUH) *hadith* that is recited in more than one of Sunni Islam’s major references, al-Albani’s (1024 (تخريج كتاب السنة؛ 1024) and al-Suyouti’s (الجامع الصغير؛ 4799), and it states

السُّلْطَانُ ظِلُّ اللَّهِ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَمَنْ أَكْرَمَهُ أَكْرَمَهُ اللَّهُ وَمَنْ أَهَانَهُ أَهَانَهُ اللَّهُ

The sultan is God’s shadow on earth, whoever was gracious to him as if he was gracious to Allah, and whoever despised him God will punish him similarly. (Translation is proposed by author).

⁵⁴⁰ Adonis, *An Introduction to Arab Poetics*, translated by Catherine Cobham (London: Saqi Books, 2003), 75.

structures. While the development of column/arch design in Islamic architecture was influenced by older types—Greek and Roman—and by some functional and structural necessities, its significance, as a religious symbol, points to the Islamic belief in submission, the original definition of the word ‘Islam.’ For, in contrast to His Divine power of “holding the sky without any perceivable columns,” humans are bound to the material world, which prescribes certain conditions for preserving human existence.⁵⁴¹ Accepting the limitations and requirements of such material existence also dictates submission to the will and power of this world’s creator, or *Allah*, whose throne is believed to be carried by eight angles on judgment day.⁵⁴² This Quranic description found its way to Islamic architecture through many different applications, like the fountain of Amr ibn al-‘As mosque in Cairo. A more elaborate example of such application is also found in the design of Dome of the Rock, built by the Umayyads in 691AD. The overall conception of the mosque is based on the octagon, which is “a step in the mathematical series going from square to circle, the natural symbol for the perfection of heaven.”⁵⁴³ Yet, the idea of an eight-column structure is again reminiscent of the Byzantine archetypical terminology ‘*octagon ciborium*,’ which underpinned the design of church altars or baldachins.⁵⁴⁴ The Umayyads superimposition of the octagon analogy over the mosque’s internal space possibly attempted to override previous Byzantine interpretations, suggesting the elevated status of Islam, its supreme deity and in turn its Caliph. The conquest of Abbasids over the Umayyads, who later relocated their capital to Andalusia, necessitated then the invention of a new architectural style that symbolised the Abbasid’ propagated status as religious reformers. The city of Baghdad’s pure circular form (section 6.3.2) and clearly defined administrative sectors assumes such interpretation. Comparably, the Umayyads’ capital of Cordoba, referred to as

⁵⁴¹ Quran (*al-Ra’d*) 13:2, English translation, <https://quran.com/13> (accessed June 6, 2018).

⁵⁴² Quran (*al-Haqqah*) 69:3-18, English translation, <https://quran.com/69> (accessed June 6, 2018).

⁵⁴³ Cyril Glassé and Huston Smith, *The New Encyclopaedia of Islam*, rev. ed. (New York: Altamira Press, 2001), 122.

⁵⁴⁴ Tamari, *Iconotextual Studies in the Muslim Ideology of Umayyad Architecture*, 48.

‘The Middle City,’ intended to reinforce their political legitimacy as Islam’s true representative, echoing the Quranic definition of Muslims as,

*And thus we have made you a just [middle] community that you will be witnesses over the people.*⁵⁴⁵

This political rivalry was further expressed in the lofty horseshoe-shaped arches of the Cordoba mosque, whose tri-lobes are described by Andalusian geographer, al-Idrisi (1099-1165), as a symbol of the Umayyads’ central position and their supremacy over Byzantine and Muslim rivals.⁵⁴⁶ Through such symbolism, the Cordoba Mosque’s arches not only point to their direct geo-political position in Andalusia but also reach out to the Umayyad’s first capital in Damascus, where, they established their first empire over that of the Byzantine. By suggesting so, the symbolic resonance of the arches seem to bridge the Umayyads’ past and present, amassing a plethora of historical events and collective memories. This nostalgic memory is expressed by Abdul Rahman al-Dakhel (731-788 AD), the first Umayyad ruler of Andalusia, upon the sight of a caravan heading towards Damascus, when he states,

*O’ you vanishing traveller crossing my land, send my regards from my part to my parts ... As you know my body is one land [Andalusia], while my heart and its beloved are in another [Damascus].*⁵⁴⁷

It is also present in other verses that describe his estrangement after noticing some palm trees embellishing his palatial courtyard at Andalusia,

*In the middle of the land, I saw a palm tree that has been moved to the Western lands away from the land of palms ... so I said you are just like me in your expatriation and long separation from kins and family ... Just like me, you grew up in a land in which you are foreign.*⁵⁴⁸

⁵⁴⁵ Quran (*al-Baqara*) 1:143, English translation, <https://quran.com/2> (accessed May 27, 2018).

⁵⁴⁶ Al-Idrisi, *Nuzhat al-mushtaq fi ikhtiraq al-afaq* (نزهة المشتاق في اختراق الأفاق), Arabic (Cairo: Maktabat al-Thakafah al-Diniyah, 2002), 576.

⁵⁴⁷ Mohammed Abdullah Anan, *Dawlat al-Islam fil Andalus* (دولة الإسلام في الأندلس), Arabic, 4th ed., (Cairo: Al-Khanjy Library Publications, 1997), 1:202. Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

أيها الراكب الميم ارضي أقر من بعضي السلام لبعضي
ان جسمي كما علمت بأرضي وفؤادي ومالكه بأرضي

⁵⁴⁸ Anan, *Dawlat al-Islam fil Andalus*, 203. Translation proposed by author. Original Arabic text:



Figure 77 – Left, Fountain of Amr Ibn al- 'As Mosque. Right, Dome of the Rock and its fountain.



Figure 78 - The Mihrab of the Great Mosque of Cordoba, with adjacent horseshoe-shaped columns.

تبدت لنا وسط الرصافة نخلة تناءت بأرض الغرب عن بلد النخل
فقلت شبيهي في التغرب والنوى وطول التناهي عن بني وعن أهلي
نشأت بأرض أنت فيها غريبة فمثلك في الاقصاء والمنتأى مثلي

Accordingly, it is understood that Al-Dakhel's poetic statements speak of many embodied memories and physical references, which oscillate "between the more articulated and explicit form of space and its implicit deep structure."⁵⁴⁹ For, the verses suggest that the image of Damascus manifests itself as a primordial impulse that transcends temporal or spatial situations, pointing to some overarching themes that encircled an Arab's perception and experience of space since the Pre-Islamic era. One such meaning is that of home-ness, a concept that was used in Pre-Islamic poetry to describe a lover's trail, the tribe's chivalrous journey and the *Kaaba*'s sacred rituals (sections 5.5 and 5.6.3). In Islamic Arabia, the idea of home-ness seems to move beyond the denotation of a specific place, as is the case with al-Dakhel's Damascus, intending instead the totality of religiously accumulated meanings that allowed a Muslim Arab to rehabilitate his/her understanding of the *fadaā/tareeq* duality as a path back to paradise, or his/her original home, as implied by Avicenna's poem (section 6.2).

6.6 Analysis (02): The Islamic City in-between Horizons

In contrast to its Pre-Islamic manifestation as a mediator of some socially-constructed meanings, the chapter discussed how Arabic language's position during the Islamic period was hinged on its value as a revelatory medium of divine truth. In this way, language presents itself as Islamic Arabia's primary *fadaā*, eradicating the Pre-Islamic relevance of the desert and displacing the role of language from the social to the sacred. This led to the proliferation of Arabic language and its studies, suggesting that linguistic rectitude is in itself a mirror of Arabian *ethos*, as implied in Ibn Malik's (1204-1274AD) following explanation of grammatical rules,

*Our words are useful terms like straighten ... and a noun and a verb then a preposition... One is a word and the saying circulates ... and a word might have many meanings to congregate.*⁵⁵⁰

⁵⁴⁹ Vesely, *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation*, 48.

⁵⁵⁰ Mohammed bin Abdullah bin Malik al-Andalussi, "Alfiyat ibn Malik (ألفية بن مالك)," Al-Hakawati, <http://al-hakawati.net/arabic/Civilizations/58.pdf> (accessed Sept. 19, 2017), 20.

Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

كلامنا لفظ مفيد كاستقم ... واسم وفعل ثم حرف الكلم
واحدة كلمة والقول عم ... وكلمة بها كلام قد يؤم

For this reason, the chapter explored the role of the Quran in expanding a Pre-Islamic Arab's limited desert-bound horizon, accruing a multitude of spatial references and paradisiacal metaphors that have been incorporated into the Islamic town's overall layout. The persistence of such analogies was probably one of the most important factors that united Muslims all over the Islamic empire, in spite of their ethnic, cultural or political differences. For, the Quranic image of paradise manifested itself not only as a final destination along one's spiritual *tareeq* but as a primordial impulse that transcends the temporal limit of man's earthly existence, an idea that was often discussed in Islamic literature, philosophy and poetry. Even though paradise is a universal image shared by many religious perspectives, its application in Islam has been distinctively translated through both architecture and language. The chapter explored this application through several urban case studies, architectural elements and poetic descriptions, portraying how this paradisiacal analogy was not adhered to all Islamic cities at all times, since their perception and experience were dependent on the divergent motives of the poets, let alone their relationship to the political authority of the time. Accordingly, the chapter suggested that the meaning of Sūq-ness during the Islamic era has been displaced, redefining an Arabs' understanding of being-in-space and being-with-others. To examine how this displacement took place, the following will identify, analyze and interpret the major themes and sub-themes identified in this chapter.

6.6.1 Thematic Analysis: Initial, Focused and Theoretical Coding

As previously explained in section 3.5.3, the thematic analysis of each historical level comprises of four coding stages: initial, focused, theoretical and Idea Networking. First, collected evidence of the Islamic Arabian stage is listed in separate tables in relation to the larger research variables of History – Language – Lived Experience. This represents the initial coding stage, where Islamic Arabia's historical context, as shown in the following table, identifies sky, earth, *Sirat Mustaqeem* and paradise among the most important subthemes, pointing together to the Islamic beliefs in *Allah*'s divine presence and power. The initial coding of

Islamic Arabia's language and lived experience reinforce the importance of these sub-themes as understood from the different poetic and literary evidences discussed in this chapter. This initial coding is followed by the Focused Coding Diagram (FCD), which suggests possible links between the different sub-themes, as understood from the narrative analysis applied in the previous discussions of the Historical Context/ Lived Experience as well as the socially reciprocated meanings presented through the Language circle (Fig. 80). The FCD's results are translated onto the initial coding table in the form of colour codes. The colour coded themes present a set of larger categories, under which sub-themes are re-organized. This results in a Theoretical Coding table, which identifies *Allah* (Light), Sky, Earth, Darkness, Knowledge, Paradise and *Sirat al-Mustaqeem* as the main themes of this stage (Fig. 83). The identification of these large themes depended on the number of relationship that they establish in relation to other themes on the FCD. The themes hierarchy has also been depicted on the Idea Networking diagram (Fig. 84) through the differing size of the nodes.

Historical Context (Linguistic, Religious and Urban)			
Religious		Urban/Arch.	
Sub-Themes	Evidence	Sub-Themes	Evidence
Morality	Some people died but their good deeds survive... and some others live and among people they are considered dead	Paradisiacal Metaphors	The whole market is covered with wooden roofs, so the residents remain in overflowing shade ... Each [of Aleppo's] market captures the sight and mesmerizes its perceivers with sheer beauty... As for its Qaḡaria, it is a garden of beauty and cleanliness surrounding the honoured mosque (Ibn Jubayr)
Arabic Language as Knowledge / Writing / News-making	Writing is one type of news, possibly the noblest of them all, as where would we have known the news of other nations if it was not for the immemorial traces of pens (Biruni)	Connecting Rivers / Four Gates / Intersecting paths	Illuminated Manuscripts - Tapestries - Baghdad and Zabid's urban plan
	The horses and the night and the desert know me ... as well as the sword, the arrow, the paper and the pen (Mutanabbi)	Khitat (Socio- Urban Hierarchy)	Baghdad's description by al-Ya'qubi and Ibn Jubayr - Zabid's description by Hallaj "A review of the urban pattern around the mosque indicates a pattern of land tenure common to early Islamic cities known as "khitat" or tribal allocations."
Sky as Benaā	It is Allah who made for you the earth a place of settlement and the sky a ceiling [building] (Quran)	Social and Occupational Segregation	Baghdad and al-Qahira descriptions. Maqamat illustrations of al-Hariri
Earth as qarar	[He] who made for you the earth a bed [spread out] and the sky a ceiling [building] (Quran)		
Sirat Mustaqeem	Confirming what was before it which guides to the truth and to a straight path (Quran) Guide us to the straight path - The path of those upon whom You have bestowed favour, not of those who have evoked [Your] anger or of those who are astray (Quran)		
Paradise	Gardens of perpetual residence; they will enter them with whoever were righteous among their fathers, their spouses and their descendants. (Quran) it [paradise] has what no eyes have seen, ears have heard, or came across a human's heart (Hadith)		
Primordial Existence in paradise	A dove (allegory of the soul), both noble and proud, has descended to you from the most exalted of places ... Hidden from all sight, she, who has never been veiled ... She resigned and never wished to stay, but then got attached to the world's void ruins ... I assume she forgot the heavenly vows and the houses that she once never wished to part ... She mourns when she recalls her years in the hunting park, with tears that pour forth and do not stop (Avicenna)		
Earth as place of Decay	What remains with me is an unexplainable amount of lust; so, I mourned, prayed, and grieved the departure. And this was the comfort of fast waning dreams, may God protect us from this earthly entrapment and the constraints of the hyle (Suhrawardi)		

Figure 79 - Table showing the Initial and Focused Coding for Islamic Arabian Historical Context. By author.

Language (Literature, Poetry and Philosophical Discourses)		
Literature		Poetry
Sub-Themes	Evidence	Evidence
Allah as Light	Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The example of His light is like a niche within which is a lamp, the lamp is within glass, the glass as if it were a pearly [white] star lit from [the oil of] a blessed olive tree, neither of the east nor of the west, whose oil would almost glow even if untouched by fire. Light upon light (Quran)	Most poetry and descriptions of cities always refer directly and indirectly to divine presence.
Paradise	Ibn Jubayr's descriptions of Aleppo Ya'qubi's descriptions of Baghdad she remains my adored residence, and my beloved home, its star is shining, its weather is clear, and its pebbles are jewels, and its breeze is perfumed, and its sand is strongly scented (Mo'ataz)	May God send his rainy clouds to a place in Baghdad between al-Khold [district], Karakh [district] and al-Jisr [bridge district] ... It is the beautiful town that has granted its people things that have not been gathered since we were in Cairo ... Tender air in moderation and good health, and water that is sweeter than wine ... And its Tigris [river] has two banks planned from one crown to the other and one palace to another ... Its ground is like musk, its water like silver, its pebbles like rubies and pearls (Khazen) Baghdad you are a remedy for sore eyes... Baghdad you are God's meeting place with all nations... I have been expelled from you, but I shall not say goodbye... Baghdad you are the antidote for a soul's illness... The sun you are for joyous trees... or a paradise of all the paradises that I know on earth (Mutanabbi)
Elevated Souls / Purity as symbols of Paradise	I am writing from a town [Samarra], whose people God elevated (Mo'ataz) [Other] faces, that Day, will show pleasure. With their effort [they are] satisfied. In an elevated garden. Wherein they will hear no unsuitable speech. Within it is a flowing spring. Within it are couches raised high. And cups put in place. And cushions lined up. And carpets spread around. (Quran)	For at this point the pilgrim's journeyings cease. Who is cleansed with these purifications, Verify he is fit to commune with God (Shabastari)
Darkness	Or [they are] like darkneses within an unfathomable sea which is covered by waves, upon which are waves, over which are clouds - darkneses, some of them upon others. When one puts out his hand [therein], he can hardly see it. And he to whom Allah has not granted light - for him there is no light (Quran)	
Pollution/Sin/Dirt/ West as symbols earthly decay and Darkness	And my state in this story has changed; I fell from high above into the void, among people who have no knowledge of faith, entrapped in the lands of the Occident [a metaphor of the Darkness as opposed to Eastern meaning light]. (Suhrawardi)	I will leave a dirty city of hated water and air... and I will expose Damascus by the disasters that are committed by its own people (Safi)
Knowledge	News are not like witnessing. For witnessing means the recognition of the seen by the seeing eye in the time of its existence and the place of its happening... If it was not for the news's possible ill consequences, its value could have preceded that of seeing and witnessing (Biruni)	My knowledge is with whenever I go it benefits me... my heart is its vessel not its confining box ... If I am at home, knowledge was in it with me... or if I was in the Sūq then knowledge was in the Sūq (Imam Shafei)
Sirat - Mustaqeem as truth	Confirming what was before it which guides to the truth and to a straight path (Quran)	Our words are useful terms like straighten ... and a noun and a verb then a preposition... One is a word and the saying circulates ... and a word might have many meanings to congregate (Malik)

Figure 80 - Table showing the Initial and Focused Coding for Islamic Arabian Language. By author.

Lived Experience (Sufist and Political Interpretations)			
Sufist		Political	
Sub-Theme	Evidence	Sub-Themes	Evidence
Purification of Soul/Body and Air/Water	First purification from filthiness of the flesh; Second, from sin and evil whispers of the temper; The third is the purification from bad habits, Which make men as beasts of the field; The fourth is the purification of secret (Shabastari)	God's Shadow on earth	The sultan is God's shadow on earth, whoever was gracious to him as if he was gracious to Allah, and whoever despised him God will punish him similarly (Hadith) The days have come for light to fall from the sky's crevices... Its brightness can be seen shining on your house even if you cover it with a veil... Praise [Allah] who governs things with His power and who elevated Haroun over all other Caliphs... [You are] an Imam who fears Allah, anticipating his meeting day and night (Abu Nowas)
Paradise (What Eye has not seen)	The ideal man is loved for his pious works, He finds an abode in a "laudable station" He finds a portion of what eye hath not seen, nor ear heard. (Shabastari) Hadith of the prophet describing paradise.	Will of God and his Power	to be divided into small but distinct units arranged in a complex manner, and (like the universe) supported and kept whole by the will of God – thus the deemphasis of the squinches, clearly the work of man, a feature common to all muqarnas domes (Baqillani) Quranic Interpretations that shape, colour and luminosity are accidents which by definition are subject to continuous change according to the will of God (Ash'ari)
Universe as fadaā / Orbit as path	In the name of God, I ask you orbiting universe... Is there a reason for your path or you are forced to... Tell us why you take such orbit ... for we are amazed and cannot understand you... For, we see in you space [fadaā], so is there a space [fadaā] other than this space [fadaā] moving you? (Shibli)	Architectural Motifs as symbols of political power	holding the sky without any perceivable columns (Quran) on the religious level, the muqarnas dome was adopted by the rising Sunni forces of Syria and North Africa ... Doubtless it was used with full awareness of its theological associations ... On the political level, the muqarnas dome provided a formal link with the Abbasid caliphate, the heartland of orthodoxy and source of legitimating (Tabbaa)
Allah's Visible/Invisible Presence in the world	that which by itself is not visible, as dark bodies; (2) that which is by itself visible, but cannot make visible anything else, such as luminaries like the stars, and fire before it blazes up; (3) that which is by itself visible, and also makes visible, like the sun and the moon, and fire when it blazes up, and lamps (Ghazali) Architectural motifs (stars and repetitive geometric forms) - Calligraphic inscriptions on buildings. God's tajalli in all things (Ibn Arabi)	Middle Nation	And thus we have made you a just [middle] community that you will be witnesses over the people (Quran)
Elevated Souls / Decaying bodies	And, to you the souls are elevated or, do they remain with their bodies to decay? (Shibli)	Home-ness / Original residence	O' you vanishing traveller crossing my land, send my regards from my part to my parts ... As you know my body is one land [Andalusia], while my heart and its beloved are in another (al-Dakhel) In the middle of the land, I saw a palm tree that has been moved to the Western lands away from the land of palms ... so I said you are just like me in your expatriation and long separation from kins and family ... Just like me, you grew up in a land in which you are foreign (al-Dakhel)
Maqamat (Spiritual Hierarchies)	stations of ascent on the path to God (Ibn Arabi) Shabastari's poem - Ibn Arabi's Sufist philosophy on the Perfect Man.		
Veil / God's Throne	Indeed, your Lord is Allah, who created the heavens and earth in six days and then established Himself above the Throne. He covers the night with the day, [another night] chasing it rapidly; and [He created] the sun, the moon, and the stars, subjected by His command. Unquestionably, His is the creation and the command; blessed is Allah, Lord of the worlds. (Quran)		
The Sūq as a path / journey	Through the use of geometry and mathematics, a vital positive space carves a hierarchy of negative, geometric volumes through which the soul of the city flows like a river that has furrowed channels in the crust of the earth. The spaces carved out are pristine, symmetrical, and ordered. The order is like that of crystalline particles polarized by a magnet. In the traditional city, the magnet is the linear movement system of the bazaar, and the particles are shops, caravanserais, madaris, mosques, and bathhouses (Ardalan)		

Figure 81 - Table showing the Initial and Focused Coding for Islamic Arabian Lived Experience. By author.

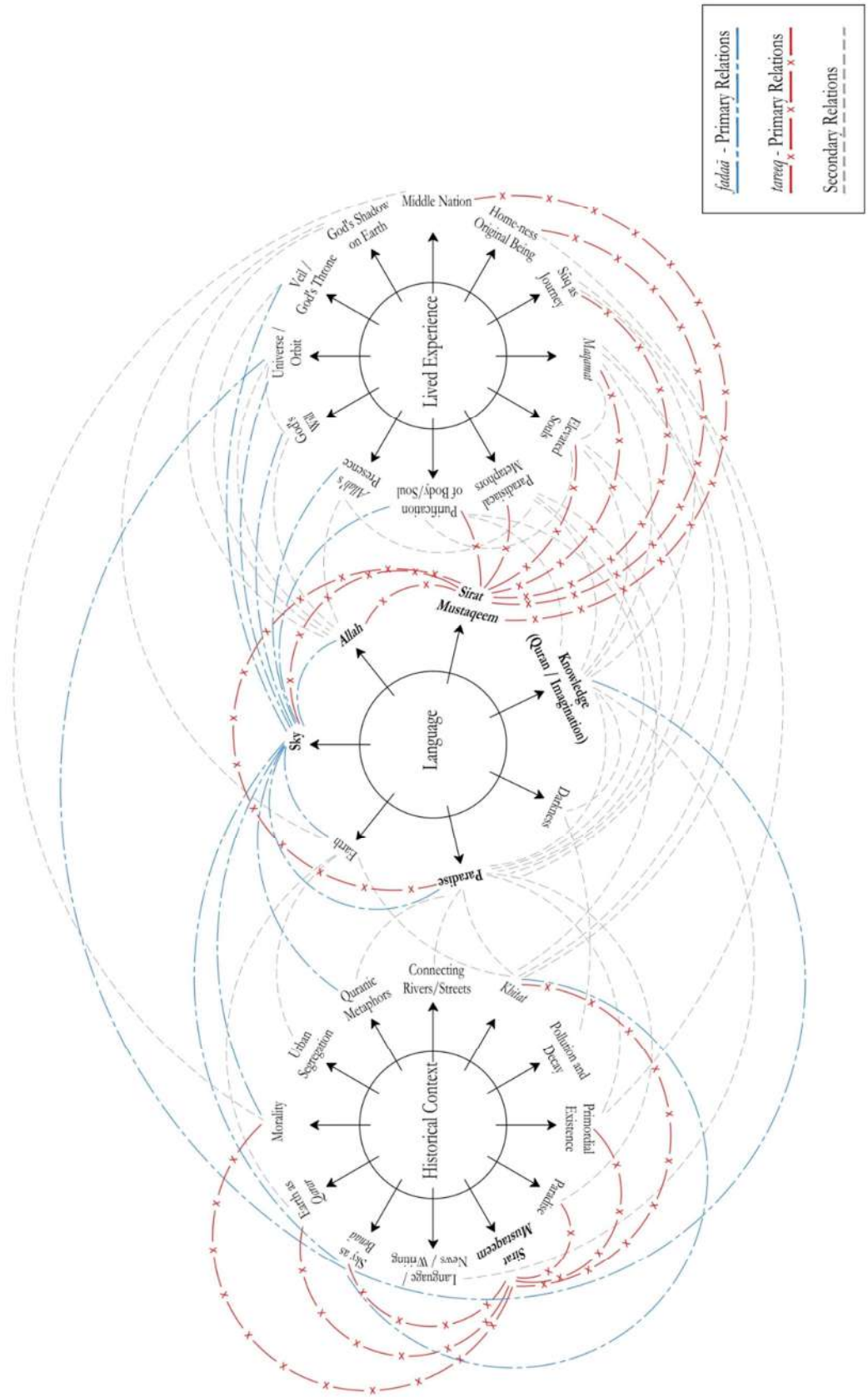


Figure 82 - Focused Coding Diagram for Islamic Arabia. By author.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
	Sky	Sirat al-Mustakeem	Darkness	Paradise	Earth	Knowledge	Allah
1	Elevated souls (Ibn Shibi)	Maqamat (Ibn Arabi, Shabastari and music)	West as non-believers (Suhrawardi)	Four intersecting rivers / Connectivity (Case studies, tapestry and manuscripts)	God's Shadow on Earth (Hadith)	Writing and News-making (Mutanabbi and Baruni)	Will of God (Quran, al-Baqillani, Ash'ari doctrine)
2	Bennā (Quan)	Departure (Suhrawardi and Avicenna)	Pollution of Air, Water and Sky (Moataz on Baghdad and al-Safi on Damascus)	Commune with God (Quran, Shabastari and Ibn Arabi)	Qamar (Quran and al-Idrisi). Thus includes everyday mundane living	Holy Scriptures (Quran, Hadith, Imam Shafei, Ash'arites)	Visible/Invisible (Quran, al-Ghazali and Ibn al-Haytham)
3	Veil / Throne (Quran, Ibn Arabi and al-Ghazali)	Journey (Ibn Arabi, Shabastari, Travel journals)	Jahannam (Quran)	Purification of Soul, Body, Air and Water (Shabastari, Jubayr, Moataz)	Decay and War (Mutanabbi, Ibn Shibi, Avicenna, Moataz on Baghdad)	Quranic Interpretations and Parasidiacal Metaphors (Ibn Arabi and Ghazali)	Primordial Existence (Avicenna, Quran and Hadith)
4	Universe / Orbit (al-Baqillani and Ibn Shibi)	Corridor/Bridge/Spine (Jubayr, Maqrizi and Ya'qubi)	Djinn / Shaitan (Quran)	Hierarchy (Case studies, Quran, Hariri, Ardalan and Bakhtiari)	Middle [just] community (Quran, Cordoba's name)	Contemplation/Imagination (Ibn Arabi, Avicenna, Ibn Shibi)	
5		Morality (Quran, Hadith and Imam Shafei)		What eyes has not seen (Shabastari, Jubayr, Ya'qubi, Idusi, Khazen, Moataz)	Khat, Arrangement and socio-urban divisions (Ya'qubi, Baqillani and Case studies)		

Figure 83 - Table showing the Theoretical Coding for Islamic Arabia. By author.

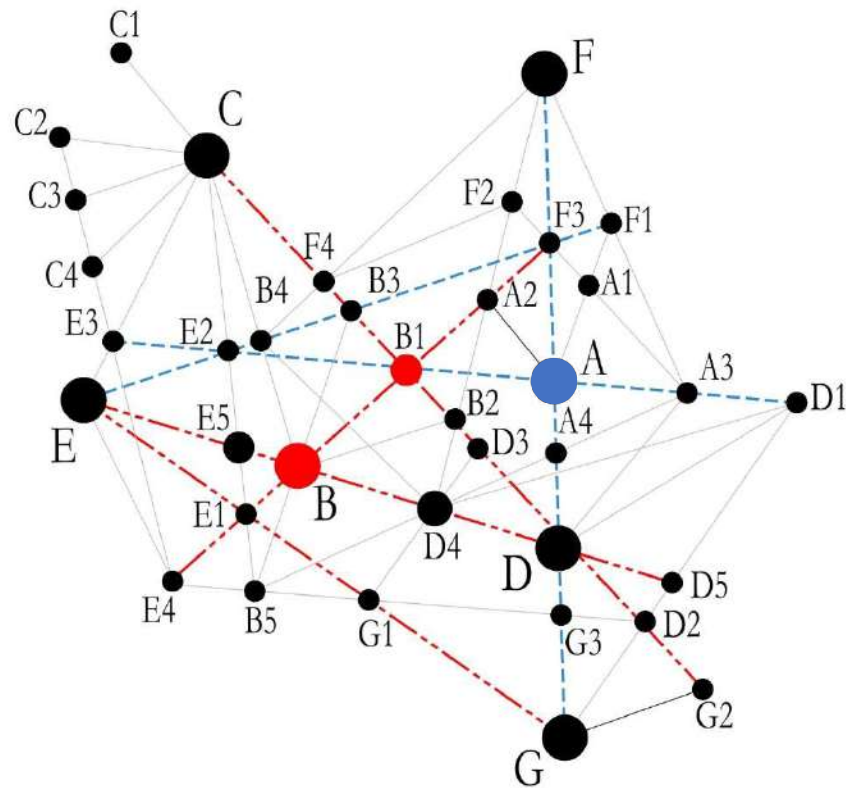
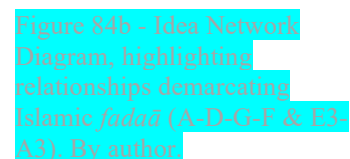
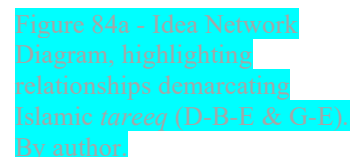


Figure 84 - Idea Network Diagram, mapping Islamic Arabia's large themes and smaller sub-themes. By author.

6.6.2 Thematic Analysis: Idea Networking Diagram

The Idea Network (IN) Diagram illustrates the relationship between the larger and smaller themes identified throughout the course of this chapter. These relationships are based on the findings of the thematic analysis. As shown in the IN diagram (Fig. 84), the in-time experience of Islamic Sūqs is shaped by several important narratives (Fig. 84a), which together suggest that Islamic Sūqs symbolize an imaginary bridge that links Earth (E) to Paradise (D) through the idea of *Sirat Mustaqeem* (B). Physically, such link is established through the Islamic urban strategies of *Khitat* (B5) that were based on the different Quranic descriptions of Paradise (D4). Through these descriptions, Paradise, which is depicted in Islamic literature as both a departure point (B2) as well as a destination (section 6.2), is symbolically attained through the Sūq's spiritual journey (B3) from and to the mosque. This movement assumes constant acts of purifications (D3), possibly pointing beyond itself to the distant image of pilgrimage towards the holy *Ka'ba* or the house of God. This explains why the



development of the Sūq typology in relation to the mosque was described, both poetically and mystically, as a succession of stations, or *Maqamat* (B1), suggesting its imperative role in elevating a Muslim's soul towards 'what eyes has not seen' (D5). Since such interpretation is based on many Quranic revelations (F3) as discussed in sections 6.2 and 6.5.1, the Sufist relevance of the Islamic Sūq's journey is grounded on the ability of individual contemplations (F4) to imaginatively capture *Allah*'s presence, or *tajalli*, in all things (G2). Still, the case studies and the Islamic Empire's architectural calligrams (sections 6.5 and 6.5.2) also suggest that the consolidation of these individual reflections into a larger social narrative were influenced by some hegemonizing political and religious interventions.

Fig. 84a also points to the role of these interventions in the making and experience of Islamic Sūqs through the relationship of *Allah* (G) to Earth (E), which is mediated by his shadow on earth (E1). By suggesting so, the IN-diagram identifies *Maqamat* (B1) and Hierarchy (D4) as nodes that demarcate the difference between individual experience, as a form of Sufist reflection, and social segregation, as a precursor of spatial participation. In this way, the diagram proposes that the Sūq, as both 1) an urban strategy for organizing and connecting the different parts of the city, and 2) as a symbol of *Sirat Mustaqeem*, is indefinitely tied to the ruler's 'acts of will,' which in themselves are considered reflections of those of *Allah* (G1). This possibly explains why both mosque and palace took precedence at the heart of Islamic cities, as was the case in Baghdad and *al-Qahira* for instance (sections 6.3.2 and 6.3.4). It also explains the different poetry composed in the praise of Islamic rulers (section 6.4), elevating them to a precarious sacred level, a practice that seems to persist today, as implied in Mahmoud Darwish's (1941-2008) contemporary verses,

*Pull your shadow away from the Arab ruler's court, so he does not
hang it as a medal [on his chest] ... and break all of your shadows
so they don't spread them as carpets or veils.*⁵⁵¹

⁵⁵¹ Mahmoud Darwish, *Madih al-Dhil al-'Ali* (مديح الظل العالي), Arabic (Beirut: Dar 'Odeh, 1983), 21-22. Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

واسحب ظلالك عن بلاط الحاكم العربي حتى لا يعلقها وساما ... واكسر ظلالك كلها كيلا يمدوها بساطا أو ظلاما ... كسروك، كم كسروك كي يققوا على ساقيك عرشا... وتقاسموك وأنكروك وخبؤك وأنشأوا لبيدك جيشا

The IN-diagram also suggests that such interventions reinforced a Muslim community's religious belief in being a Middle nation (E4). This granted a Muslim, both Arab and non-Arab, the opportunity to righteously commune with *Allah* (D2) by submitting to His will (including that of his Shadow), to experience his invisible/visible presence in all things (G2) and to actively participate in the imagined paradisiacal space (D) of the Islamic town through its urban hierarchies (D5), *Sūqs* (B), moral prescriptions (B5), and symbolic associations (the smell of the air, the taste of the water, the color of the sand and sight of the stars).

Accordingly, the Islamic town's everyday experiences seem to have played an imperative role in influencing a Muslim's understanding of Islam. Moreover, such experiences were complemented by some deep observations of natural phenomena (A4), like the sky's *benaā* (A2), resulting not only in major scientific innovations but also in some important spiritual revelations (F3) regarding one's as well as society's path towards righteous living (E4). Here, the idea of primordial existence (G3) emerges as another constituent of many of the era's philosophic discourses, attempting to explain the nature of being in an Islamic space and to develop a city image that can bridge (B4) Man back to his original 'home,' or paradise.

These readings suggest that there was a shift in an Arab's understanding of *Sūq*-ness during the Islamic era, displacing its Pre-Islamic capacity as a communication/reconciliatory channel between competing social groups, to a purification bridge that moves from a tarnished earthly existence towards Man's paradisiacal 'home.' Even though such shift still beholds much of a Pre-Islamic Arab's nostalgic attachment to places, Muslims, both Arabs and non-Arabs, relayed this sentiment to a primordial memory of paradise, favoring religious unity over ethnic diversity. In the case of Islamic Arabia, this resulted in the segregation of the Arabian *fadaā* (Fig. 84b) into a decaying earthly existence (E3) and a distant veiled sky (A3). The connection between these two realms was granted through a long journey (B) of righteousness (E4), moral obligations (B5), spiritual successions and purifications (D4), which together symbolize the shift in an Arab's understanding of the *tareeq*. Many such ideas were translated in the

physical space of the Islamic town, as noted in the case studies (section 6.3.1-6.3.4). By dividing the city into ethnic, administrative, religious or professional quarters, the Islamic town not only embodies some Pre-Islamic tribal memories, but possibly also hints at the different ‘righteousness’ levels of its residents. This is also manifest in the practice of isolating the rulers’ residential quarters, reinforcing again an Islamic city’s imaginary **sacred** scale. The Sūq plays an important role in this formula, acting as the city’s main passageway towards purification and divine revelation.

6.7 Conclusion of Part (02)

In light of the above, it is understood that the experience of the medieval Islamic town was bombarded by various political, religious and personal motives, reflecting the many controversies, let alone conflicts, of the era. Opposing the currently propagated image of the medieval Islamic space as a homogeneous socio-urban phenomenon, the triangulation of previously discussed evidences (Fig. 85) suggests that the apparent congruence of an Islamic city’s layout responds not only to the re-interpretation of earlier Roman/Byzantine types (section 4.2.2) or some contemporaneous political/military needs alone (section 4.6) but possibly also to some accumulated socio-cultural memories of an Arab’s Pre-Islamic lifeworld, where the *fadaā/tareeq* duality played the greatest role in anchoring him/her intelligibly within a particular historical horizon. The chapter discussed how the Islamic situation allowed the development of this duality within new socio-cultural and political challenges, resulting in the establishment of a franchised urban prototype that not only responded to the medieval needs of an urban dweller and his religious beliefs, but also reflected the different cultural influences—Byzantine, Persian and Arabian—that encircled his understanding, perception and experience of the world before and after the coming of Islam. While the franchised prototype (Mosque + Bath + Sūq) seems to have granted the disparate regions of the Islamic empire some means of urban conformity, particularly during the empire’s early years, the chapter explored whether and

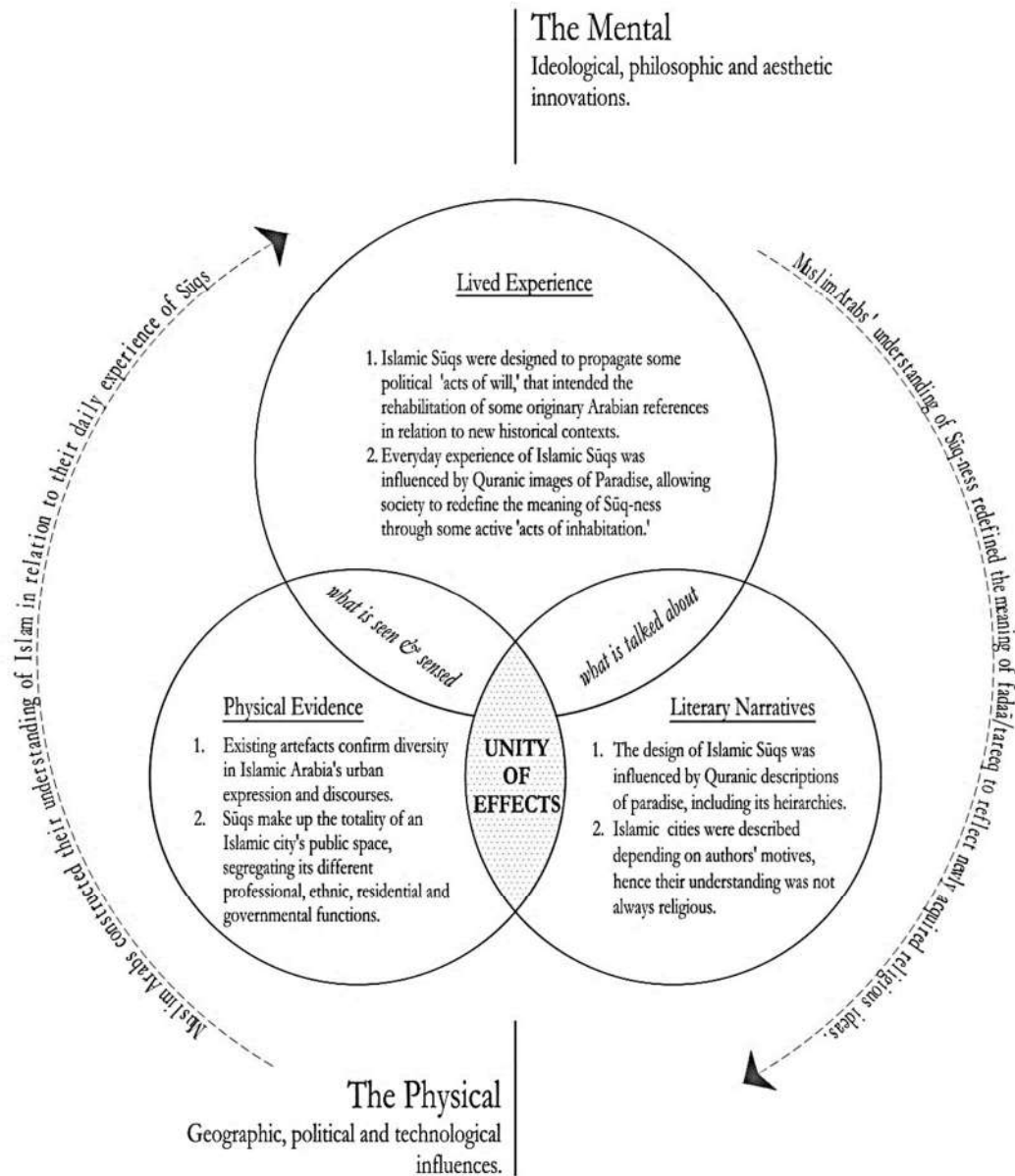


Figure 85 - Diagram showing the triangulation of Islamic findings. By author.

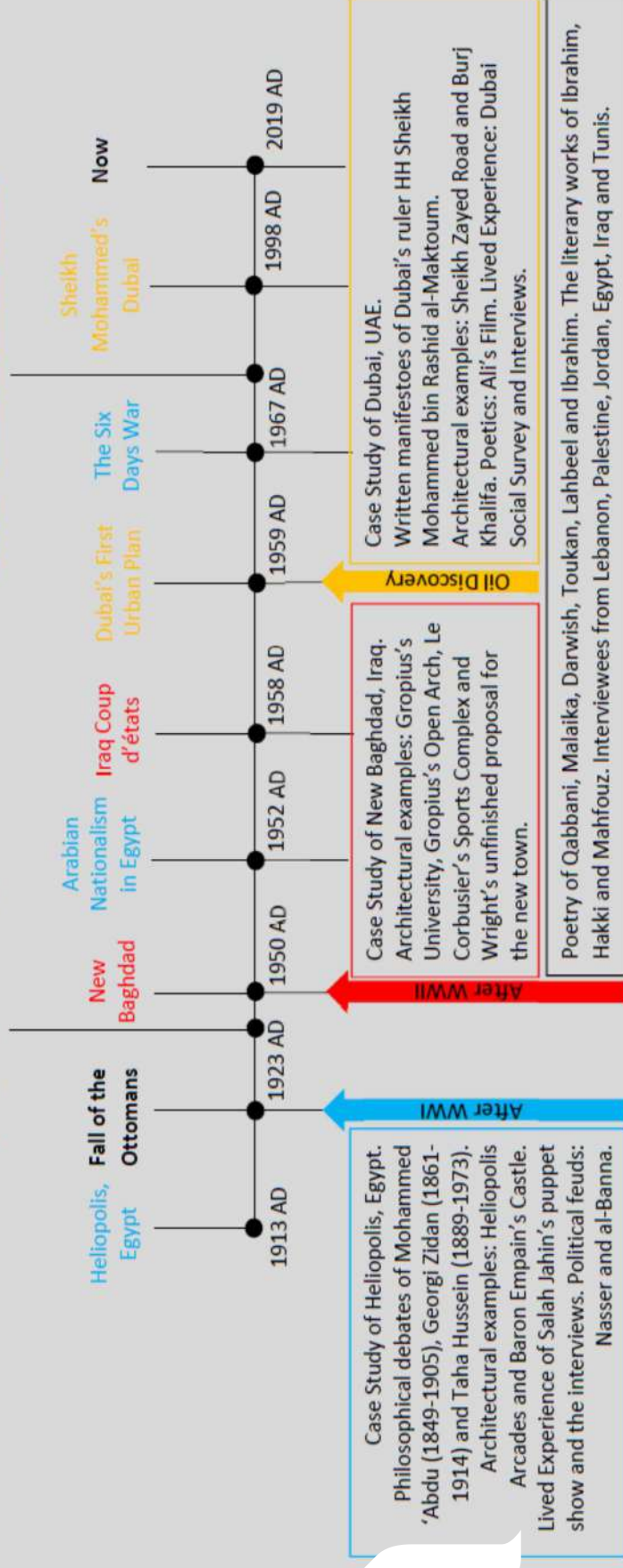
how this layout exported some of Arabia's Pre-Islamic ideals, fusing them with the dictations of the new Islamic situation and the foreign cultures they acquired.

By proposing so, the chapter discussed how the Islamic situation, in its religious and humanistic outreaches, provided Arab dwellers with a particular form of 'market morality' that seems to differ, both mythically and administratively, from that of its medieval European counterparts (section 4.2.3). This has been reflected in the Sūqs' layout and its various organizational strategies (sections 6.3.1-6.3.4); as well as in the different contemporaneous

narratives (poetic – scientific – Sufist) that described its architectural and socio-urban developments (sections 6.4 – 6.5.1 – 6.5.2). The evidences examined in this chapter support this reading, portraying how the Islamic era's franchised urban strategies played a role in displacing the meaning of Sūq-ness from a *fadaā* of interdependent desert-dwelling to an exclusive religious position. Examined poetry and urban calligrams also showed how this exclusive religious position was tied to a range of mythic symbols and socially-negotiated meanings that turned the ancient trade route's *tareeq* into a path for heavenly salvation (section 6.5). While the works of some Sufist and Islamic philosophers played a role in expanding this limited religious perspective (section 6.5), the hubris of Orthodoxy, which confined knowledge to text as opposed to reflection, resulted in the development of many *wahm*-laden presuppositions that did not differentiate between Islam as a matter of faith and the Islamic as a particular historic situation. Today, such prejudice seems to influence the region's socio-urban perception of the Sūq too, confining it to a medieval situation that seldom reflects a Post-Islamic Arab's needs, struggles or aspirations. The following chapter will discuss the effects of such presuppositions, testing whether and how they affected the Sūq's experience during the Post-Islamic era.

1948 - Israel Invades Palestine

1971 AD - United Arab Emirates founded



7

Chapter Seven

Interpretation of the Parts (3) **Post-Islamic Sūqs in-between Tradition and** **Modernity**

7.1 Introduction

The end of WWI, which marked the fall and dissolution of the Ottoman/Islamic Caliphate, resulted in many socio-urban changes that were noticeable in Arabia's physical map (Fig. 86) and possibly also in its modes of socio-urban engagement. For, after this dissolution, Arab cities attempted to establish an identity away from that of the now-inexistent Ottoman Caliphate, relying not on the idea of Islam as a unifying horizon but on Arabic language and common fate as bonding factors (section 8.2), as understood from Reynolds's contemporary definition of an Arab as "a person whose language is Arabic, who lives in an Arabic country, and who is in sympathy with the aspirations of the Arabic people."⁵⁵² For this reason, the current Arabian situation is referred to in this chapter as Post-Islamic.

⁵⁵² Dwight Fletcher Reynolds, *Arab folklore: A Handbook* (Greenwood Press, 2007), 1.

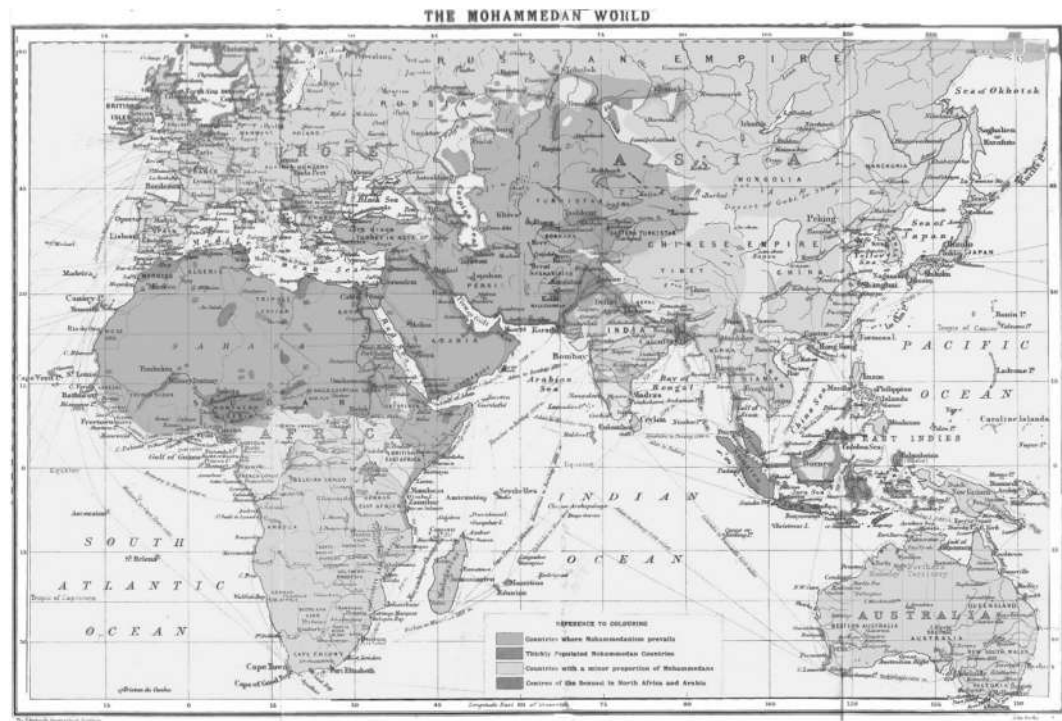


Figure 86 - Top, Map of the Islamic Empire (Ottoman) right before 1914, or WWI. Bottom, Map of the Arab Nations League (The Arab World) today.

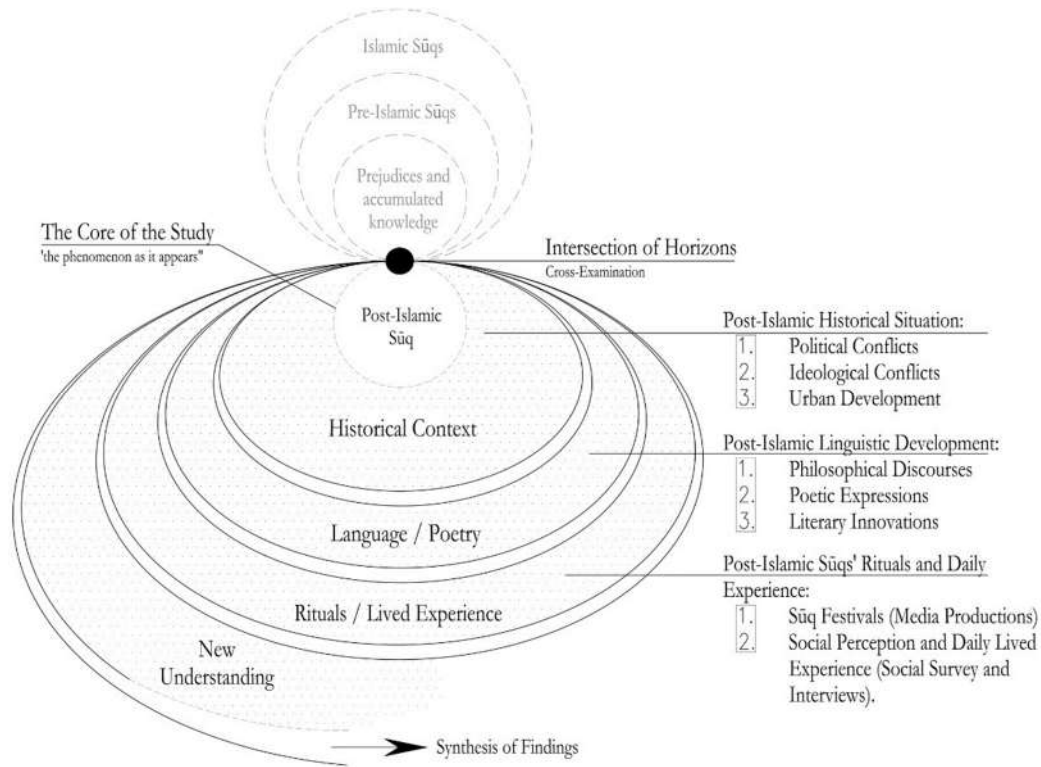


Figure 87 - Hermeneutic Circle of Post-Islamic stage, portraying the different research variables and examined data types. Illustration by author. Circle of Post-Islamic stage, portraying the different research variables and examined data types. Illustration by author.

So, this chapter examines the development of Arabia's Post-Islamic urban strategies and their effects on an Arab's understanding of Sūq-ness today, as relayed through the region's current poetic products, everyday lived experiences and festivals. First, the chapter highlights the political and philosophical shifts characterizing the period and then examines their effects on the region's urban strategies through the case studies of Heliopolis, New Baghdad and Dubai, which together frame the period's Historical Context circle right before and after the dissolution of the Ottoman Caliphate. This is followed by an examination of the traditional Arabian Sūq's Post-Islamic poetics, festive rituals and everyday lived experience, which together delineate the period's Language and Lived Experience circles. This examination uses various primary evidences, including 20th century Arabic literature and poetry, a puppet show, a social survey and interviews. The cross-examination of these three circles intends to identify some persistent themes in the region's socio-urban discourse today, suggesting some links that could explain whether and how a displacement of the Sūq's meaning took place.

7.2 Historical Context: 20th Century Arabia and the Rise of Nationalism

After the fall of the last Abbasid dynasty during the early 16th century, the Arabian world was occupied by the Ottoman empire, whose authority over its vast expanses was not justified by military conquest alone but rather by its propagated image as “the protector of Sunni Islam.”⁵⁵³ The effects of Ottoman rule on Arabia’s aesthetic products is beyond the interest of this research, yet it could be argued that despite the cultural disparity between the Arabs and their Turkish, and later Western, occupiers, the Sūq remained an integral component of most Arab cities until the early decades of the 20th century, as understood from historical records, photographs, literature and cinema productions. Still, the dissolution of the Ottoman empire resulted in some ideological rifts that gave rise to various reformation calls (section 7.3.2), including those of Mohammed ‘Abdu (1849-1905), Georgi Zidan (1861-1914) and Taha Hussein (1889-1973), who called for a rehabilitation of the region’s medieval Islamic perspective to incorporate the scientific developments of the West (section 7.3.2). Responding to some of these calls, Arabia’s Post-Islamic urban scene witnessed different forms of change on both physical and social levels. While global politics, post-colonization and technological advancements manifest themselves as possible external reasons behind these changes, Yasser Elsheshtawy argues that they have also been geared by an overarching religious discourse that oscillates between an absent spiritual centre and the aspirations of a liberal future.⁵⁵⁴ This argument possibly explains the many critiques of backwardness targeting the Arab region today (section 7.4), particularly in its emerging urban centres of the Gulf, which according to Elsheshtawy are “caught between a variety of worlds, ideologies and struggles.”⁵⁵⁵ Elsheshtawy’s statement echoes some 1980s poetic concerns, like

⁵⁵³ John McHugo, *A Concise History of the Arabs* (New York: The New Press, 2013), 89.

⁵⁵⁴ Yasser Elsheshtawy, *The Evolving Arab City: Tradition, Modernity and Urban Development* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 1-4.

⁵⁵⁵ Elsheshtawy, *The Evolving Arab City*, 4. The idea of a backward society is one of the many concepts that Leon Trotsky discusses in relation to his theory of ‘combined and uneven development.’ The term backward society for Trotsky describes a certain phase of development, which includes cultural diffusion, trade, political relations and various “spill-over effects” from one country to another.

those of Mahmoud Darwish (1941-2008), Amal Donkol (1940-1983) and Adonis (1930-), that see the missing Arabian space as a symbol of an absent Arabian being who has “no creative presence in the world.”⁵⁵⁶

To understand the genesis of many such concerns, it is important to shed light on some of the main internal conflicts and different perceptions of the era. Aside from the strong oppositions between the reformists and Orthodox Islamic thinkers of the early 20th century, some of which will be touched upon in section 7.3.2, the apex of Arabia’s ideological conflicts was reached during the 1950s, after the *coup d’états* that swept the region, giving rise to what is known as Arab Nationalism (القومية العربية).⁵⁵⁷ While this ideological movement was charged by various political intentions, its central premise was “that the peoples of the Arab world, from the Atlantic Ocean to the Indian Ocean, constitute one nation bound together by common ethnicity, language, culture, history, identity, geography and politics.”⁵⁵⁸ In this way, Arab Nationalism sought an alternative route for political, geographic and cultural unification away from the religious hegemony of the now-inexistent Ottoman Caliphate. This granted the region a larger metanarrative that allowed it to communicate its concerns and aspirations with the world—particularly the West. This is expressed in many of Egyptian president Gamal Abdul Nasser’s (1918-1970) speeches, where he states, “socialism’s most noble mission is to instate humanity, equality and freedom from slavery, and therefore it is not a form of blasphemy as called by religious figures (those with long beards).”⁵⁵⁹ By placing itself in direct confrontation with the Orthodox Islamic stream of the time, Arab Nationalism was transformed from a

⁵⁵⁶ Elsheshtawy, *The Evolving Arab City*, 2; Mahmoud Darwish, *Madih al-Dhil al-‘Ali* (مدح الظل / العلي), Arabic (Beirut: Dar ‘Odeh, 1983), 21-22; Amal Donkol, “البكاء بين يدي زرقاء اليمامة,” in *Amal Donkol: Al-a‘mal al-she’riyyah al-kamilah* (أمل دنقل الأعمال الشعرية الكاملة), Arabic 3rd ed. (Cairo: Maktabet Madbouli, 1987), 121; Adonis, *An Introduction to Arab Poetics*, translated by Catherine Cobham (London: Saqi Books, 2003), 75.

⁵⁵⁷ Adeed Dawisha, “Requiem for Arab Nationalism,” *Middle East Quarterly* 10, no. 1 (2003), <https://www.meforum.org/articles/other/requiem-for-arab-nationalism> (accessed Dec. 13, 2018).

⁵⁵⁸ Charles Smith, “The Arab-Israeli Conflict,” in *International Relations in the Middle East*, 3rd ed., by Louise Fawcett (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 245.

⁵⁵⁹ Der Untermensch, “Jamal Abdel Nasser defines Socialism in his own words (English subtitles),” filmed (1966), YouTube video, 8:05 (posted July 7th, 2016) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ExaonayiLQs> (accessed Dec 24, 2017).

revolutionary political movement to a form of “civil religion” that substituted “the traditional Islamic cult of Saints” with new political heroes, such as Nasser, Saddam and Gadhafi.⁵⁶⁰ This led to some critical, let alone violent, oppositions between the Nationalists and the Islamists, who strongly believed that the only way for rejuvenating the region was to relegate it to its early Islamic origins. This stance was influenced by the works of Hassan al-Banna (1906-1949), the founder of the Islamic Brotherhood, who argued,

*Islam is concerned with the question of jihad... and the mobilization of the entire Ummah [Society] into one body... The general (with the most eloquent expression and the clearest exposition) to jihad, to warfare, to the armed forces, and all means verses of the Quran and the Sunnah of Mohammed . . . are overflowing with all these noble ideals and they summon people in of land and sea fighting. Such was the example set by the early generations of Muslims.*⁵⁶¹

The defeat of 1967, known as the Six Days War, led to the gradual relinquishment of Arab Nationalism’s metanarrative and resulted in two important reprimands. First, the failure of Nasser, who was the unrivalled symbol of Arab Nationalism, transformed him from “a confident, vibrant hero, [into] a tragic figure, a symbol of better days, an indication of the will to resist.”⁵⁶² As shall be explored in sections 7.5 and 7.7, this translated itself into a plethora of poetic descriptions of Arab-ness as a nostalgic state that oscillates between a distant prideful history, lost future dreams and current political struggles. Second, this defeat led to the development of smaller narratives that were not based on the idea of a larger unified Arab world but on the success, pride and idiosyncrasies of smaller states. This is reflected in the urban models of emerging Arab states (section 7.3.3), such as those of the Gulf, as well as in the political stances of some Arab leaders, as expressed in Saddam Hussein’s statement,

When we talk of the [Arab] nation, we should not forget to talk about the Iraqi people ... When we talk about the Arab homeland,

⁵⁶⁰ Peter Wein, *Arab Nationalism: The Politics of History and Culture in the Modern Middle East* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 35.

⁵⁶¹ Hassan al-Banna, “Resalat al-Jihad” in *Majmou’at rassael al-Imam al-shahid Hassan al-Banna* (مجموع رسالات الإمام الشهيد حسن البنا), Arabic (Cairo: Dar al-Da’wah, 1999), 290-305.

⁵⁶² Fouad Ajami, *The Arab Predicament: Arab Political Thought and Practice since 1967* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 85.

*we should not neglect to educate the Iraqi to take pride in the piece of land in which he lives ... [Iraqis] consist of Arabs and non-Arabs, [so] when we talk of the great [Arab] homeland, we must not push the non-Arabs to look for a country outside Iraq.*⁵⁶³

These perceptions seem to have played a role in shaping Arabia's Post-Islamic view of traditional Sūqs, bringing forth some major dialectical tensions between an Arab's ideologically mediated understanding of history—through both its Nationalist and Islamicist versions—and modern-day realities. This proposition will be tested through several sets of evidences, including urban case studies, contemporary poetry, a puppet show, a social survey and interviews.

7.3 Post-Islamic Urban Developments: Case Studies

The following studies will examine the shift in Arabia's urban planning strategies during the early, mid and end of the 20th century. The choice of case studies is hinged on their ability to portray the effects of certain political intentions in revamping Arab cities and making them aesthetically, technologically as well as socially comparable to their Western counterparts.

7.3.1 Baron Empain's Heliopolis, Cairo

In Egypt, modern urban development strategies started with Khidevi Ismail's (1830-1895) pioneering projects, which included the Opera, the Suez Canal, Downtown Cairo and the Railroad system. This last project attracted foreign investors, like the Belgian Baron Empain (1852-1929), who founded the Cairo Electric Railway and Heliopolis Oases Company to implement his visionary urban project at the satellite town of *Heliopolis*, a deserted archaeological site 10km away from *al-Qahira* (section 6.3.4).⁵⁶⁴ Empain's intent was to buy cheap land away from the expensive old centre and connect them via an intricate railway system. His vision for this new town included the re-appropriation of Islamic architecture by superimposing it on a French urban plan, a strategy that would fulfil his initial French advertisement of the city as "*oasis moderne de salubrité et*

⁵⁶³ Dawisha, "Requiem for Arab Nationalism."

⁵⁶⁴ Agnieszka Dobrowolska and Jarosław Dobrowolska, *Heliopolis: Rebirth of the City of the Sun* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2006), 42.

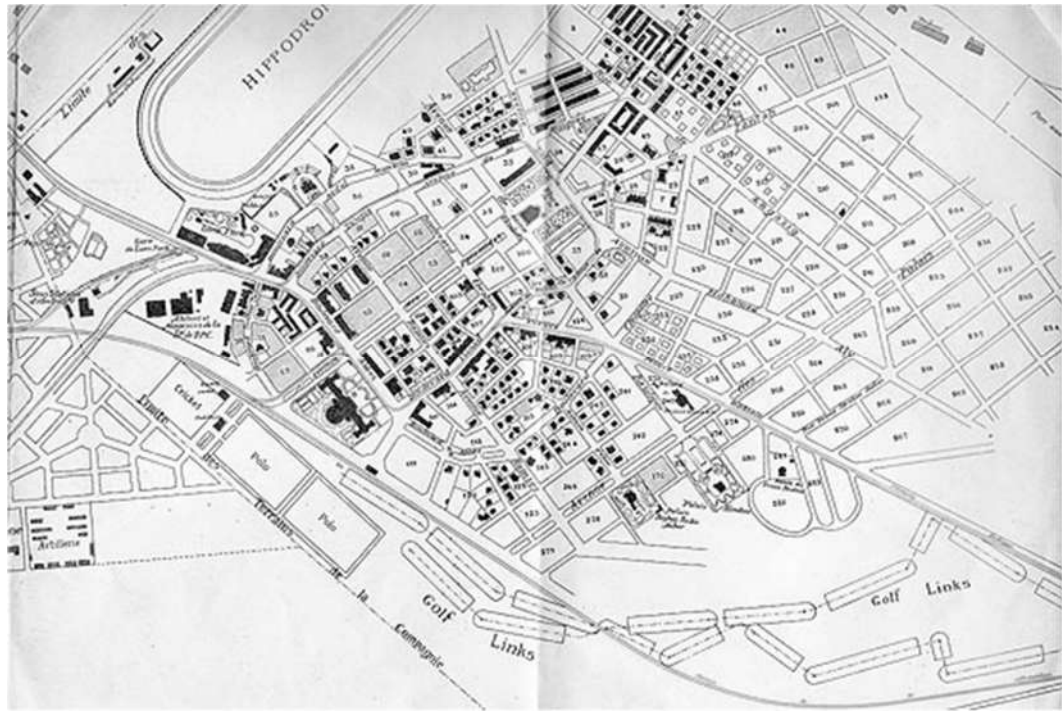


Figure 88 - Map of Heliopolis in 1913.

*d'agrément.*⁵⁶⁵ The overall layout of this new town differed from its older counterpart, with its architecture showing influences of the Parisienne Beaux-Arts tradition.⁵⁶⁶ The domes, arcades and elevations of *Heliopolis*'s buildings were gracefully dressed in some distinctly Islamic ornaments, such as wooden laces, *mashrabeya* windows and interplaying red and white brickwork. Contrastingly, the very essence of *Heliopolis*'s market street, which runs expansively uninterrupted across the town's centre, intended to mimic a Parisienne experience, with large streets, shopping **arcades** and cafés. While this attracted many wealthy residents to the area, its aloofness and distance from the centre stage of 'real' Cairene events possibly led to its neglect by literary narratives of the time. Unlike *Khan al-Khalili* and *Bayn al-Qasrein* (section 6.3.4), for example, which have been recurrent settings in many 20th century Egyptian novels, the architectural narrative of *Heliopolis* suggests such detachment, with its most distinctive features being Baron Empain's Hindu-style palace and the Catholic Basilica that adorn the extremities of its main spine.

⁵⁶⁵ Paul Sanchez Keighley, "Dreamworld of Baron Empain," *The Towner Magazine* (April 2016), <http://www.thetowner.com/baron-empain-palace-in-cairo/> (accessed Dec. 18, 2017), 2.3.

⁵⁶⁶ Dobrowolska and Dobrowolska, *Heliopolis*, 77.

HELIOPOLIS
D'EGYPTE
Oasis Moderne de Salubrité et d'Agrément

A 13 minutes du Caire par le chemin de fer
métropolitain électrique

LA PLUS BELLE SITUATION CLIMATÉRIQUE
DE TOUT L'ORIENT

SÉJOUR D'ÉTÉ ET D'HIVER • CURE DE GRAND AIR

NOMBREUSES DISTRACTIONS
HIPPODROME — Courses de chevaux et dromadaires
SPORTING CLUB — Golf, tennis et polo
AERODROME — LUNA-PARK
STADIUM — JARDINS
ET PARCS,
EXCURSIONS.

HELIOPOLIS PALACE HOTEL
UN DES PLUS VASTES HOTELS DU MONDE

HELIOPOLIS HOUSE
Family Hotel — Pensions privées — Vie familiale

Eclairage à l'électricité

Villas et appartements à louer — Terrains à vendre



Figure 89 – Left, 1913 Advertisement for Heliopolis. Right, Photo of Heliopolis arcades.



Figure 90 – Baron Empain's Hindu Palace in Heliopolis.

7.3.2 King Faisal II's Plan of Greater Baghdad

The Plan of Greater Baghdad is a visionary project initiated by King Faisal II in the mid-1950s. The king intended to invest the revenues of his now rich-in-oil country into building the city's future image in line with its legendary past glories. So, he invited many celebrated, predominantly Western, modern architects to fulfil his vision. Among these architects were Walter Gropius, Le Corbusier and Frank Lloyd Wright, with each assigned a specific task. Gropius's design of Baghdad University marked a new era in the city, one that was shaped after Gropius's own dream of re-creating Iraqi culture and not just its physical buildings.⁵⁶⁷ His utopian vision of the project was challenged after the 1958 military *coup-d'état* that ended monarchical rule in Iraq. According to Widmer, Gropius's urban layout of the university's complex remained faithful to specific design elements that not only mirrored modernist functionality but also intended to be both environmentally and culturally-sensitive.⁵⁶⁸ To achieve this goal, Gropius made ample use of date and eucalyptus trees, asymmetrically juxtaposed buildings, camel-thorn window coverings, courtyards, reflective pools and fountains. His design also incorporated some Western elements, such as a clock tower, shopping mall, swimming pools, car ports and air conditioning. The interiors of the buildings, with their courtyards and lounges, were carefully designed to allow the development of a healthy discourse among Iraq's multi-ethnic young population, an approach that he symbolized through a ceremonial arch that he called 'The Open Mind.'⁵⁶⁹ Gropius's modern approach was similarly applied by Le Corbusier in his design of the Sports Complex. Yet, Le Corbusier's intent was to propose a functional Modernist building and to introduce a new interpretation of the Quranic descriptions of paradise based on his own concept of the "*Boîtes à Miracles*," or the box that can be filled with everything one dreams

⁵⁶⁷ Ted Widmer, "Walter Gropius's lost architectural dream for Iraq," *The Boston Globe* (August 2014), <https://www.bostonglobe.com/ideas/2014/08/02/walter-gropius-lost-architectural-dream-for-iraq/raRIOjzPUBYINovMwwYbBN/story.html> (accessed December 19, 2017).

⁵⁶⁸ Widmer, "Walter Gropius's lost architectural dream for Iraq."

⁵⁶⁹ Yasser Elsheshtawy, *Planning Middle Eastern Cities: An Urban Kaleidoscope in a Globalizing World* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 71-78.



Figure 91 - Left, Gropius in front of Baghdad Faculty Tower. Right, Gropius's Open Mind Arch in Baghdad.

of.⁵⁷⁰ So, both architects sought the Western ideals of Modernism as a base for synthesizing the region's historical references with modern-day needs. In contrast, Frank Lloyd Wright's unbuilt proposal for Baghdad, intended to revamp the city's history and culture through the incorporation of circular layouts, ziggurat forms and a spiralling tower dedicated to Harun al-Rashid. In his speech at the San Rafael School in 1957, he defended his concept, arguing,

Before Iraq was destroyed it was a beautiful circular city built by Harun al Rashid, but the Mongols came from the north and practically destroyed it, now what is left of the city has struck oil and they have immense sums of money. They can bring back the city of Harun al Rashid today. They are not likely to do it because a lot of Western architects are in there already building skyscrapers all over the place and they are going to meet the destruction that is barging in on all big Western cities. So, it seems to me vital over there to try and make them see how foolish it is to join that Western procession.⁵⁷¹

⁵⁷⁰ Thomas Schumacher, "Deep Space Shallow Space," *The Architectural Review* 181, no. 1079 (1987): 41.

⁵⁷¹ Elsheshtawy, *Planning Middle Eastern Cities*, 75-76.

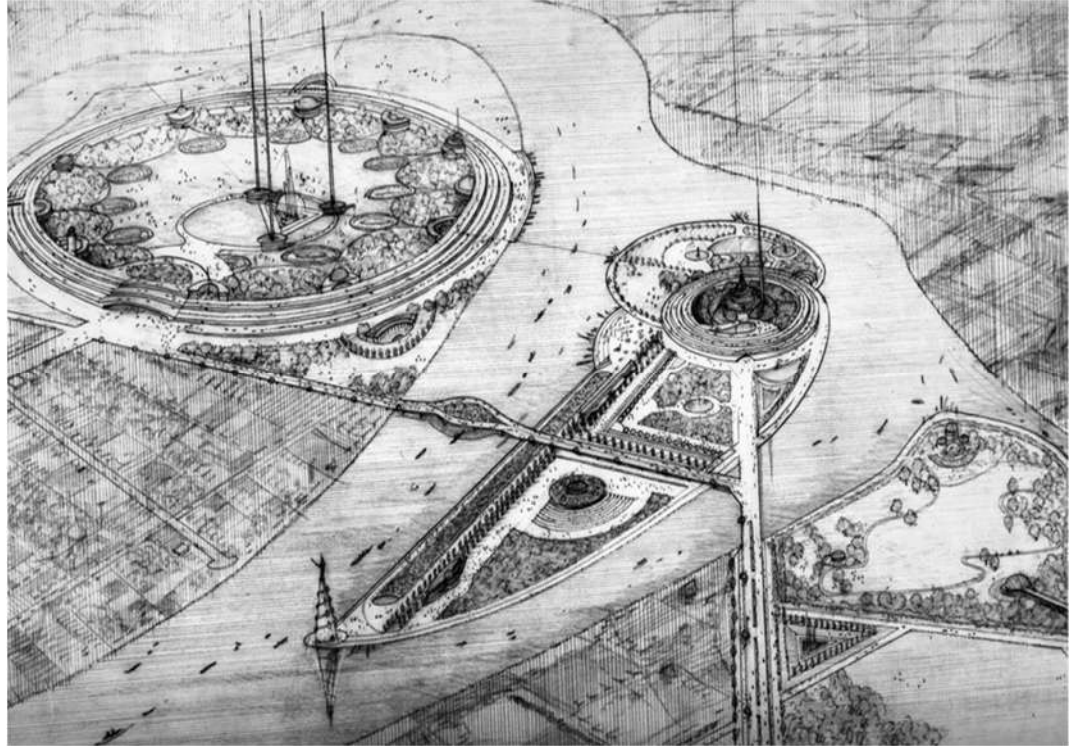


Figure 92 - Frank Lloyd Wright's plan for Greater Baghdad.

Wright's statement beholds many critical insights, which seem to coincide with the views of some reformist Arab thinkers of the time, like Mohammed 'Abdu, who argued that "Muslims could not simply rely on the interpretations of texts provided by medieval clerics, they needed to use reason to keep up with changing times;" and Taha Hussein, who believed that Arab nations cannot progress without careful scrutiny of their past achievements and failures.⁵⁷² Like Wright, both Arab thinkers saw the Western model of knowledge as one possible path for development, yet they were both critical of the complete reliance on this model without negotiating its premises against the region's cultural and religious background. Hussein argues that the inability to do so would generate incorrigible reprimands, emphasizing that,

Yes, like any another cultured Egyptian, loving his country and keen on its pride, I do not want us to meet the European feeling that there exist many differences between us, hence giving him the

⁵⁷² Taha Hussein, *Mustakbal al-thakafah fi Misr* (مستقبل الثقافة في مصر), 2nd ed. (Cairo: Dar al-Ma'aref, 1938), 15.

*right to act superior, to belittle us, and, in turn, to force us to despise ourselves.*⁵⁷³

While the idea of pride permeated much of Arabia's Pre-Islamic and Islamic literature, Hussein's above quote accentuates that pride is an integral constituent of Arab identity, a position that possibly reflects the Arab Nationalist spirit of the time.⁵⁷⁴ This idea is also found in the works of many Arab thinkers of the 50s and 60s, some of whom showed varying degrees of trust in the notion of Arabian pride. One example is Hafedh Ibrahim's (1872-1932) sarcastic statement,

*Tell the self-praising [Arabs]: Is there a reason for such pride? Show me among you a high-ranking man, show me half an inventor, show me a quarter scientist. Show me a gathering of benefactors and authors. What knowledge and books are in your schools? What preaching is in your mosques? Is there in your newspapers anything aside from lies? Your words harvested nothing but wars and catastrophes, wake up because time is gold.*⁵⁷⁵

This critique is also raised in many of Yahia Hakki's (1905 – 1995) works, particularly in his autobiography, where he states, “most of our discussions—after two words no more—are transformed from the subject—whatever it is—to the self, praising or complaining, but I feel that they both emanate from the same silenced instinct: an urge for justifying existence.”⁵⁷⁶ To test the implication of such views on Arabia's socio-urban scene, the following will examine Dubai's development models and the methods it employed to justify and demarcate its prideful existence since the early 1970s.

⁵⁷³ Hussein, *Mustakbal al-thakafah fi Misr* (مستقبل الثقافة في مصر), 16. Translation proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

نعم وأريد كما يريد كل مصري مثقف، محب لوطنه، حريص على كرامته، ألا نلقى الأوروبي فنشعر أن بيننا وبينه من الفروق ما يبيع له الاستعلاء علينا والاستخفاف بنا، وما يضطرنا إلى أن نزدري أنفسنا.

⁵⁷⁴ Hussein, *Mustakbal al-thakafah fi Misr* (مستقبل الثقافة في مصر), 15-17.

⁵⁷⁵ Hafedh Ibrahim, *Diwan Hafedh Ibrahim* (ديوان حافظ إبراهيم), 3rd ed., edited by Ahmed Amin, Ahmed Elzein and Ibrahim al-Ibyari (Cairo: Dar al-Kitab, 1987), 424-425. Translation proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

فقل للفاخرين: أما لهذا الفخر من سبب؟ أروني بينكم رجلاً ركيناً واضح الحساب أروني ربع محتسب؟ أروني نادياً حفلاً بأهل الفضل والأدب؟ وماذا في مدارسكم من التعليم والكتب؟ وماذا في مساجدكم من التبيان والخطب؟ وماذا في صحائفكم سوى التمويه والكذب؟ حصائد ألسن جرّت إلى الولايات والحرب فهبوا من مراقبكم فإن الوقت من ذهب

⁵⁷⁶ Yahia Hakki, “أشجان عضو منتسب: سيرة ذاتية بقلم يحيى حقي,” in *Qandil Umm Hashim* (قنديل أم هاشم), Arabic, by Yahia Hakki (Cairo: Hay-at al-Kitab, 2002), 9. Translation proposed by author.

Original Arabic text:

أغلب أحاديثنا—بعد كلمتين ليس غير—تتحول من الموضوع—أي كان—إلى الذات، الشكوى أو الافتخار، ولكني أحس أنهما ينبعان من نزعة واحدة متكئة: استجداء تبرير الوجود.

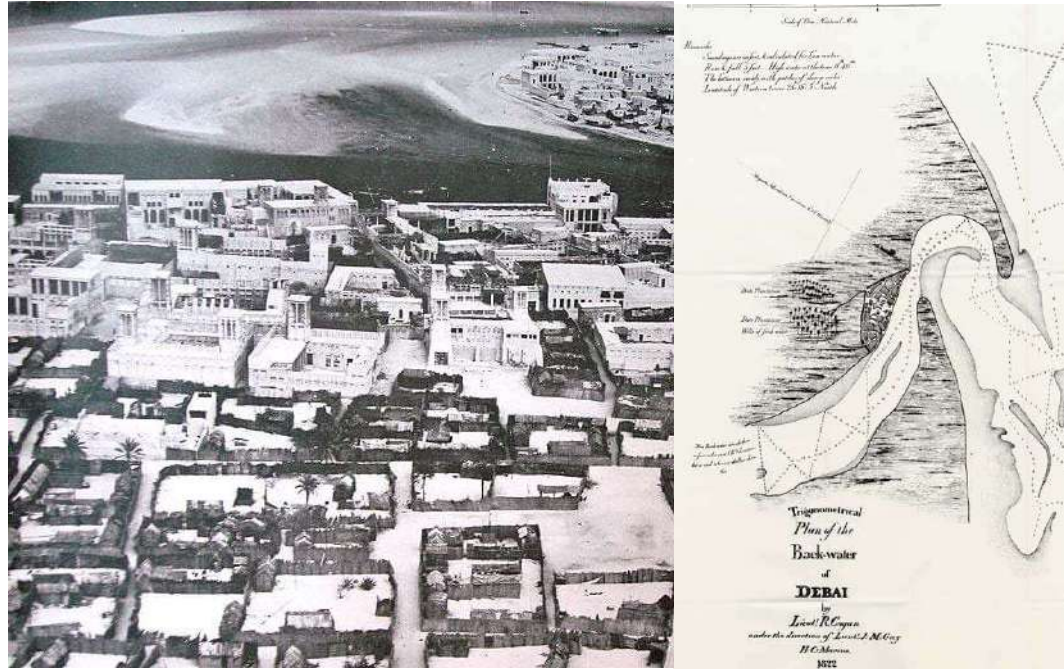


Figure 93 - Left, Aerial view of Bastakiya in 1950. Right, Cogan's map of Dubai in 1822.

7.3.3 Al Maktoum's Dubai

Like Heliopolis and New Baghdad, Dubai's urban development intended the simulation of Western modernity through building and in doing so attempted to espouse some new living ideals and gain global recognition. Little is known about Dubai in the early 20th century, except from few British maps and travellers' accounts, such as Peter Lienhardt's *Shaikhdoms of Eastern Arabia* (1957), Leila Hadley's *Give me the World* (1958) and Wilfred Thesiger's *Arabian Sands* (1959), where he describes the city as "a small Arab town on an open beach; it was a drab and tumble-down as Abu Dhabi, but infinitely more squalid, for it was littered with discarded rubbish which had been mass-produced elsewhere."⁵⁷⁷ A similar account is offered by Leila Hadley, who describes that Dubai's market place as the beating heart of the city and its centre stage.⁵⁷⁸ Accordingly, it is understood that similar to other Gulf states, Dubai's location played a great role in its economic and urban development, turning its creek into a communication channel and a settlement space. According to Jim Krane, the creek shores housed the city's first urban settlements during the early 1900s,

⁵⁷⁷ Wilfred Thesiger, *Arabian Sands*, (London: Dutton, 1959), 275.

⁵⁷⁸ Leila Hadley, *Give Me the World* (New York: Seal Press, 2003), 254.



Figure 94 -. Graphic Illustration of Al-Bastakiya today - map and space relationship footprint. By author.

when a group of Persian merchants came to Dubai and built their signature *barajeel* (wind towers) homes.⁵⁷⁹ In this area, known as *al-Bastakia*, houses were built in close proximity to each other, to the market and to the mosque, retaining the primitiveness of the setting and its social relations for over 50 years.⁵⁸⁰

After the discovery of oil, whose revenues were used to upgrade the city's urban image, *al-Bastakia* witnessed a huge wave of demolition, owing to the 'old' image that was incommensurate with its ruler's, Sheikh Rashid al-Maktoum (1912-1990), vision for New Dubai.⁵⁸¹ To fulfil his vision, the ruler sought the expertise of many foreign designers and architects, like British architect John Harris who designed Dubai's first urban plan in 1959.⁵⁸² Harris's proposed plan developed sites and spaces around the *Bastakia*, introducing a modern grid

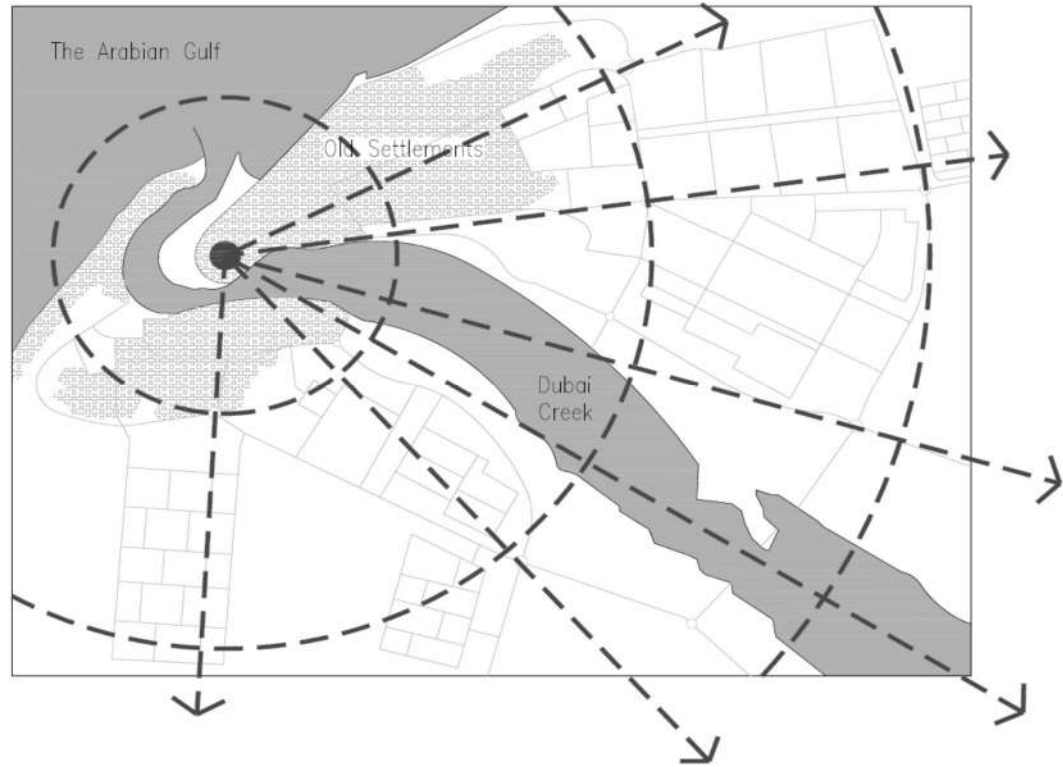
⁵⁷⁹ Jim Krane, *City of Gold: Dubai and the Dream of Capitalism* (New York: Picador, 2009), 22.

⁵⁸⁰ Rashad Bukhash, "Managing Restoration Projects in Dubai - UAE" (Master's thesis, University of Manchester, 2000), 20-23.

⁵⁸¹ Preeti Kannan, "Dubai Creek's UNESCO world heritage bid deferred," *The National*, June 22, 2014, <http://www.thenational.ae/uae/heritage/dubai-creeks-unesco-bid-is-deferred> (accessed January 8, 2015).

⁵⁸² Rem Koolhaas, Ole Bouman, Mitra Khoubrou, and Mark Wigley, *Al Manakh* (Netherlands: Stichting Archis, 2007), 159.

Figure 95 - Graphic Analysis of John Harris Master plan of 1960s (redrawn by author). Original plan courtesy of Yasser Elsheshtawy who acquired the plan during one of his visits to Harris's office.



system that opposed the organic flow of the old district and segregated the city's commercial activities from its residential quarters. This created a distinct character in the city, introducing many architectural innovations, like architectural landmarks, or icons, that became an urban necessity then and not a superfluous addition. With the passage of time, Harris's plan proved to be insufficient, leading Dubai's later ruler, Sheikh Mohammed Al-Maktoum, to expand the city beyond its historical centre. This expansion took for its trajectory a new linear path Southward, giving birth to Dubai's Sheikh Zayed Road (SZR), which represents the city's commercial spine that connects it to Abu Dhabi and Saudi Arabia. In a way, the six-lane highway manifests itself as a modern interpretation of the ancient trade route, making room for an amalgam of urban innovations that include stylistic man-made islands, lavish resorts and landmarks, which transformed the city into an icon of 'engineered' urbanism.⁵⁸³

⁵⁸³ Neyran Turan, "The Dubai Effect Archipelago," in *The Superlative City*, edited by Ahmed Kanna (Massachusetts: The Harvard University Graduate School of Design, 2013), 90.

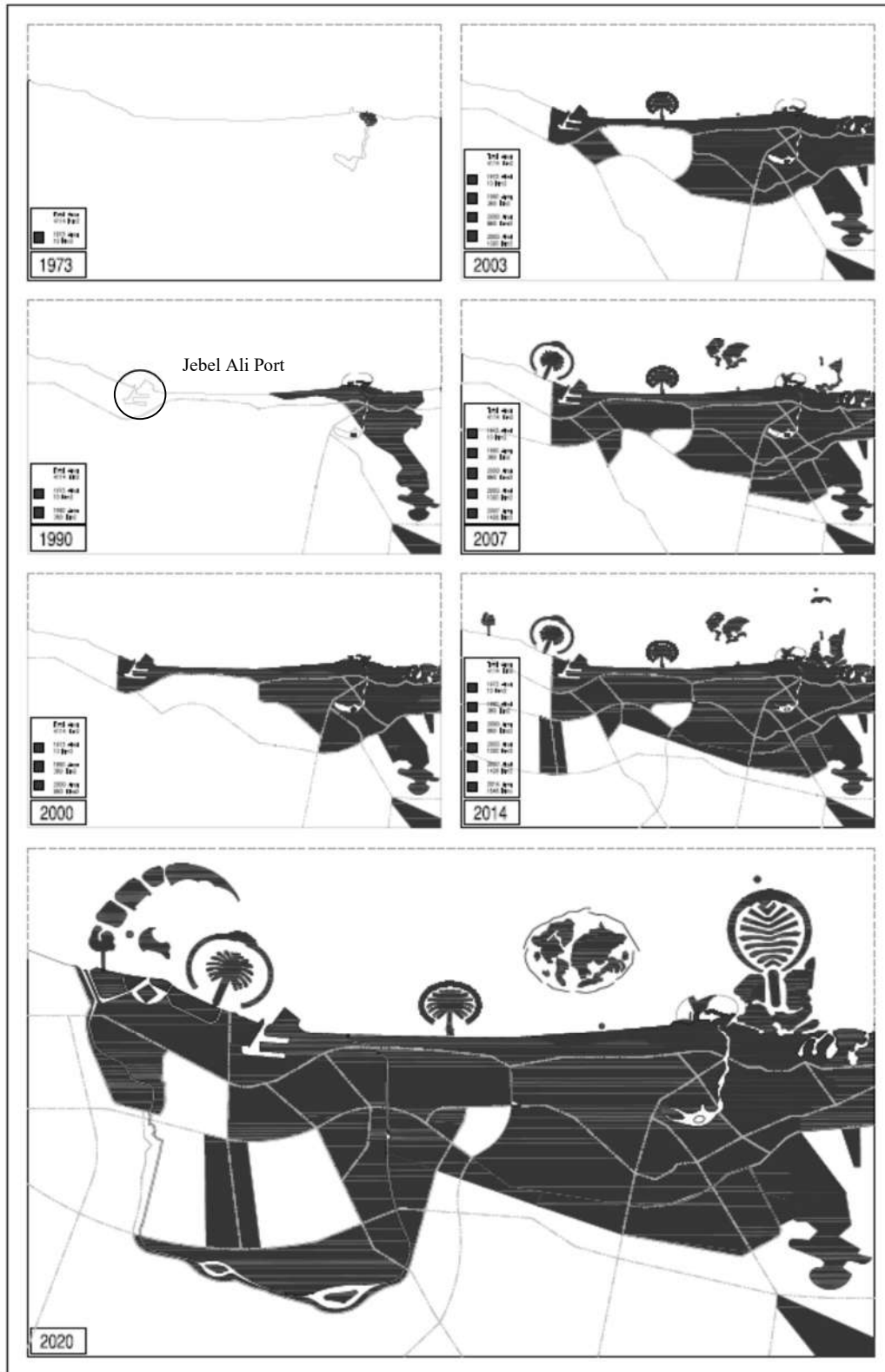


Figure 96 - Graphic Illustration of Dubai's Urban Development from 1973 until 2020 as portrayed through satellite GPS maps - statistical urban growth areas are approximate. By author.







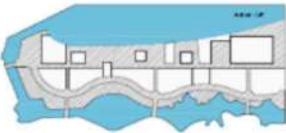



PROJECT & DATE OF COMPLETION	AREA	FOOTPRINT MAP (BY AUTHOR)	AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH (VARIOUS SOURCES)	DEVELOPPER
Dubai Internet City 2000	0.2 km ² Commercial			TECOM
Dubai Media City 2001	0.2 km ² Commercial			TECOM
Jumeirah Lake Towers (JLT) 2002 onwards	2 km ² Mixed Use			JLT Free Zone
Jumeirah Beach Residence (JBR) 2008	2 km ² Residence			Dubai Properties
Business Bay 2008 onwards	5.9 Km ² Mixed Use			Dubai Properties

Figure 97 - Graphic analysis of Branded urban projects in Dubai portraying the concept of franchised urbanism. By author.

Commenting on Dubai's urban model, Neyran Turan argues that the effects of Dubai's high-speed urbanism extend beyond its local application, transforming the whole city into an experimentation hub for its branded international projects. He further notes that, "development and investment projects are packaged and tested first as a brand within their own locality [Dubai] and then exported and franchised adaptively as templates of compact urban organization to various spots in the world."⁵⁸⁴ In this way, Dubai's building strategies seem to reverberate some of the previously discussed franchised Islamic prototypes. Yet, unlike its Islamic counterparts, the role of architecture and urbanism in Dubai is not to suggest a sense of unification and conformity but to use urban innovation as a tool for asserting economic competitiveness. This is

⁵⁸⁴ Neyran Turan, "The Dubai Effect Archipelago," 90.

understood from the written manifestoes of Dubai's current ruler, H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, who believes that building 'superior cities' begins with a long process of learning, planning and embracing the advancements of other cultures, emphasizing that great buildings reinforce the image of the city and establish stronger bridges of trust with the outer world.⁵⁸⁵ Here, the concepts of superiority and pride emerge as important ingredients in Dubai's building strategy. Yet, unlike its earlier 20th century philosophical basis (section 7.3.2), superiority for Dubai is based not on a careful merger between local and acquired cultural products but on the acquisition of others' advancements for purposes of creating economic trust. This possibly explains the city's constant expansion of its pool of mega-tall buildings and eccentric urban projects, which not only transformed the physical map of the city but also played a great role in propagating its claims of diversity and uniqueness on both architectural and social levels. On an architectural level, these claims are manifest in many of Dubai's marketed campaigns, such as the EXPO 2020 bid video titled "Ali's Film," which intends to relay Dubai's politically-manufactured image as "the greatest city in the world" owing to its radical urban transformation that turned the whole city into "one incredible EXPO."⁵⁸⁶ Ali's Film concludes with an important statement regarding the value of Dubai as a potential host of the global trading event, claiming that "we want to build our own stage for the world's most brilliant ideas."⁵⁸⁷ Accordingly, it is understood that Dubai's is constantly striving for gaining recognition by means of simulating modernity through different urban and architectural branding tactics. On a social level, these ideas are repeatedly communicated in most of Dubai government's official publications, including its website, which distinguishes between two distinct urban brands—'Definitely Dubai,' a prime touristic destination targeting foreign investors and tourists, and 'Everyday Dubai,' a manufactured urban formula that is concerned with Dubai's

⁵⁸⁵ HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, *Flashes of Thought* (Dubai: Motive Publishing, 2013), 34.

⁵⁸⁶ FilmsonUAE, "Ali's Film: EXPO 2020 Dubai Candidate City Bid Film," YouTube video, 4:23 (posted June 28th, 2012) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5d0M5kumljY> (accessed April 12, 2017), 1:22. Dubai won the bid on the 27th November 2013 with a unanimous vote.

⁵⁸⁷ "Ali's Film," 3:54.

residents' daily life.⁵⁸⁸ While the success of Definitely Dubai could be statistically assessed through the increasing numbers of tourists, new residents and rates of hotel occupancy, the socio-urban value of Everyday Dubai is hardly established.

In light of the above, it is understood that while there are available studies on Dubai's physical development and their economic consequences, there exists little information on the effects of such developments on Dubai's social perception or experience (section 7.4). For this reason, the following will discuss the findings of a social survey that was conducted to test the validity of Everyday Dubai's claims of uniqueness and diversity, and to better understand the effects of Dubai's politically-designed urban map on its residents' perception and experience of the city. The findings will be later cross-examined with Post-Islamic Arabs' perception of traditional Sūqs to identify the difference between the two lived experiences.⁵⁸⁹

7.4 Dubai's Social Perception: A Survey

The above case studies discussed some of the different urban planning strategies in Post-Islamic Arabia. The case studies suggested that the region's urban attempts for joining the Western procession aimed at creating a balanced synthesis between imported models and local types. The case study of Dubai, as a representative of emerging 'caravan' states, further portrayed that the city's urban strategies beheld many political and economic implications. This led some theorists, like Elsheshtawy and Mike Davis, to argue that Dubai's dependency on borrowed forms **without scrutinizing** the city's historical and/or cultural references in relation to available production possibilities **suggests** a backward model of development, that,⁵⁹⁰

⁵⁸⁸ Government of Dubai, "Definitely Dubai," <http://www.dubaitourism.ae/definitely-dubai/destination-brand> (accessed May 3, 2014).

⁵⁸⁹ Statistical information extracted from consensus reports published by *Dubai Statistics Centre*, online. Urban Expansion http://www.dsc.gov.ae/Reports/DSC_SYB_2013_01%20_%2003.pdf and Population Growth http://www.dsc.gov.ae/Reports/DSC_SYB_2012_12_7.pdf (accessed May 10, 2014).

⁵⁹⁰ Elsheshtawy, *The Evolving Arab City*, 1; Mike Davis, "Fear and Money in Dubai," *New Left Review*, no. 41 (2006): 53-54.

takes not their beginning, nor the stages of their evolution, but the finished product itself. In fact, it goes even further; it copies not the product as it exists in its countries of origin but its “ideal type,” and it is able to do so for the very reason that it is in a position to append instead of going through the process of development. This explains why the new forms, in a backward society, appear more perfected than in an advanced society where they are approximations only to the “ideal” for having been arrived at piecemeal and within the framework of historical possibilities.⁵⁹¹

Acknowledging that this cannot be generalized across all Post-Islamic Arab cities given the presence of some important regionalist expressions during the mid-20th century, exemplified in the works of Hassan Fathy (1900-1998) in Egypt, Mohamed Makiah (1914-2015) in Iraq and Ja’far Toukan (1938-1914) in Jordan, the following discusses the findings of a survey that investigated the social perception of Everyday Dubai (section 7.3.3) for purposes of later juxtaposing it with the current perception and experience of traditional Sūqs.

7.4.1 Social Survey: Methodological Process and Application

As discussed in section 3.4, social surveying and interviews are employed as collection methods in this research. Each of these two methods was used to generate evidence that can assist in better understanding the displacement of the Sūq’s meaning in Post-Islamic Arabia. The movement from general social perceptions (social survey) to in-depth personal experiences (interviews) grants the research an opportunity to expand its interpretive horizon and assists in the validation of evidence and findings. As discussed in section 3.4.2, random sampling was used to recruit participants for the social survey.⁵⁹² This sampling technique was employed on the basis that it can recruit a large number of participants, whose responses can be used to compare the city’s social perception against the claimed values of brand ‘Everyday Dubai.’ For this reason, the social survey, was distributed via *Facebook* and *Instagram*, where a ten-questions form was posted on the researcher’s main page, anticipating a Snowballing effect,

⁵⁹¹ Mike Davis, “Fear and Money in Dubai,” *New Left Review*, no. 41 (2006): 53-54. This critical observation is also adopted by Elsheshtawy in his cited work on Dubai.

⁵⁹² Merriam, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, 78-80.

which the researcher could not effectively confirm. So, the researcher redistributed the questionnaire to all *Facebook* and *Instagram* pages that bear the term ‘Dubai’ in its title, since the intention was to gather information from a large and diverse group of participants who live in the city, with no restrictions in terms of age, nationality or gender. The questionnaire was drafted with several criteria in mind, including 1) the use of simple and direct language, 2) limited number of questions in order to encourage more *Facebook* or *Instagram* users to complete the survey, 3) combination of scale-rating, open-ended and visual questions to diversify the results, and 4) the use of digital collection and online analysis applications for ease of storage, retrieval and decoding. The social survey generated evidence from over 220 voluntary *Facebook* users. Aside from general demographic and scale-rating questions, the importance of the survey rests on the last two questions that sought descriptions for Dubai’s daily lived experience.⁵⁹³

7.4.2 Social Survey: Results and Preliminary Interpretation

The total number of valid responses collected through this online survey was 228, showing a highly-diverse resident population with a major concentration in the Arabian sector, an observation that highlights Dubai’s imperative role as a promising Middle Eastern haven for young Arabs, particularly after the political upheavals that swept the region since 2010.⁵⁹⁴ Aside from statistical evidence, the survey suggested that Dubai’s social perception is generally a positive one, considering architectural innovation as “a public statement of Dubai’s continuous efforts to be the best at whatever task they set out to achieve.”⁵⁹⁵ Most responses also proposed that Burj Khalifa is Dubai’s most representative icon, alluding to some positive values, like achievement, uniqueness, beauty, luxury, presence, memory, elegance, heroism, creativity, power, perseverance and identity.

⁵⁹³ A copy of the online form is provided at the end of the dissertation in Appendix B (11B.1).

⁵⁹⁴ A summary of results, as generated by Google, is provided in Appendix B (11B.2). Yet, it must be noted that results have been refined to exclude duplicated entries and those who refused inclusion in the research. For a full review of all 242 results, refer to <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1ki0qY6DEv7gPcZ4RbNPxqYWjdeG2GIVvBWdd7WLUxGs/edit#gid=0>.

⁵⁹⁵ Refer to survey results compiled in Appendix B (11B.2), entry number 167.

According to one response “it [Burj Khalifa] represents Dubai’s stance in the world, summarizes its development and growing wealth, and puts Dubai on the map.”⁵⁹⁶ Another response claimed that “Burj Khalifa represents the multicultural image of Dubai.”⁵⁹⁷ Still, when asked to describe the whole city using one word, responses varied, with some of the mostly used positive adjectives being growing, beautiful, dynamic, modern, diverse, luxurious, magical and unique. These positive perceptions were opposed by 10-15% of survey respondents, who described the city as superficial, Disney-ish, soul-less, materialistic, contradictory, crowded and a ‘salad bowl.’⁵⁹⁸ These descriptions—both positive and negative—present themselves as recurrent themes in Dubai’s socio-urban discourse, attempting to explain not only the city’s politically constructed image but also the many challenges facing its residents, who, according to one respondent, are “living on the never-never and aspiring to a lifestyle that they think they should have because it’s the culture of the city. In reality, everyone’s running like mad just to stand still.”⁵⁹⁹ This view is also reflected in some other responses that believe the city to be only concerned with its propagated image and with breaking world records, arguing that “these labels are what matter here.”⁶⁰⁰ This statement was further expounded through the survey’s last question, where respondents were asked to describe Dubai in relation to other commercial brands. Here, 76% of respondents saw an affinity between Dubai and globally renowned luxury brands, such as Mercedes, Rolls Royce, Gucci and Louis Vuitton. These readings, while affirming the marketed image of the city, point to the increasingly blurred boundaries between the physical act of production, which is grounded on layers of accumulated practical knowledge, and the image of production, which intends the “useless displays of money, created and built by someone else’s blood and sweat only to try and prove a point.”⁶⁰¹ One response that possibly

⁵⁹⁶ Appendix B (11B.2), entry number 66.

⁵⁹⁷ Appendix B (11B.2), entry number 186.

⁵⁹⁸ Appendix B (11B.2), entry number 63.

⁵⁹⁹ Appendix B (11B.2), entry number 193.

⁶⁰⁰ Appendix B (11B.2), entry number 49. Similar critiques can be found in entries 27, 70 and 135.

⁶⁰¹ Appendix B (11B.2), entry number 122.

summarizes this specific issue claims that “[Dubai’s] ambition and vision outweigh the means to achieve it.”⁶⁰²

In light of the above, Dubai appears to have succeeded in positioning itself within the league of luxury brands, using architecture to communicate its aspirations for uniqueness, dynamism and economic affluence. It also seems that the intended values of Brand Dubai are consistent with the content of its architectural representations and its governmentally propagated image. However, the survey identified some problems relating to the significance of Everyday Dubai as a lived experience, where society’s inability to identify with the city beyond its physical shell suggests the absence of a unifying mythic construct. Yet, looking at specific architectural examples, such as Burj Khalifa, the survey identified traces of an emerging social dialogue that is trying to make sense of Dubai’s embodied meanings. Aside from its commercial value, the Burj was described by most respondents as the heart of the city, and its physical image for them **symbolized** a mirror, a rocket, a vertical city, stacks of money, a magic stick, a tree (form of new life), hanging gardens, a Gothic cathedral/castle and a ladder to heaven.⁶⁰³ In this light, it could be argued that while many of these responses point to a materialistic culture, some of them have not yet lost faith in the possibility that Dubai’s icons can still capture some ‘magical’ meanings.⁶⁰⁴ Even though these responses relate directly to Dubai’s particular example, the critical reflections presented through the survey possibly extend themselves to describe a larger universal position, pointing to the waning mythic outreach of today’s urban spaces. This proposition echoes Charles Jencks’ critical views on the meaning of iconic buildings today, and their

*ability to provide a new and condensed image, to be high in figural shape or gestalt, and stand out from the city . . . to become powerful it must be reminiscent in some ways of unlikely but important metaphors and be a symbol fit to be worshipped.*⁶⁰⁵

⁶⁰² Appendix B (11B.2), entry number 193.

⁶⁰³ Appendix 11.B2, entries number 3, 8, 15, 22, 27, 29, 35, 37, 39, 50, 76, 88, 97, 107, 109, 111, 136, 139, 143, 144, 146, 150, 153, 157, 162, 168, 170, 171, 183, 187, 190, 222, 223.

⁶⁰⁴ Appendix B (11B.2), entry numbers 98, 126, 184 and 208.

⁶⁰⁵ Charles Jencks, *The Iconic Building* (New York: Rizzoli International Publication, 2005), 23.

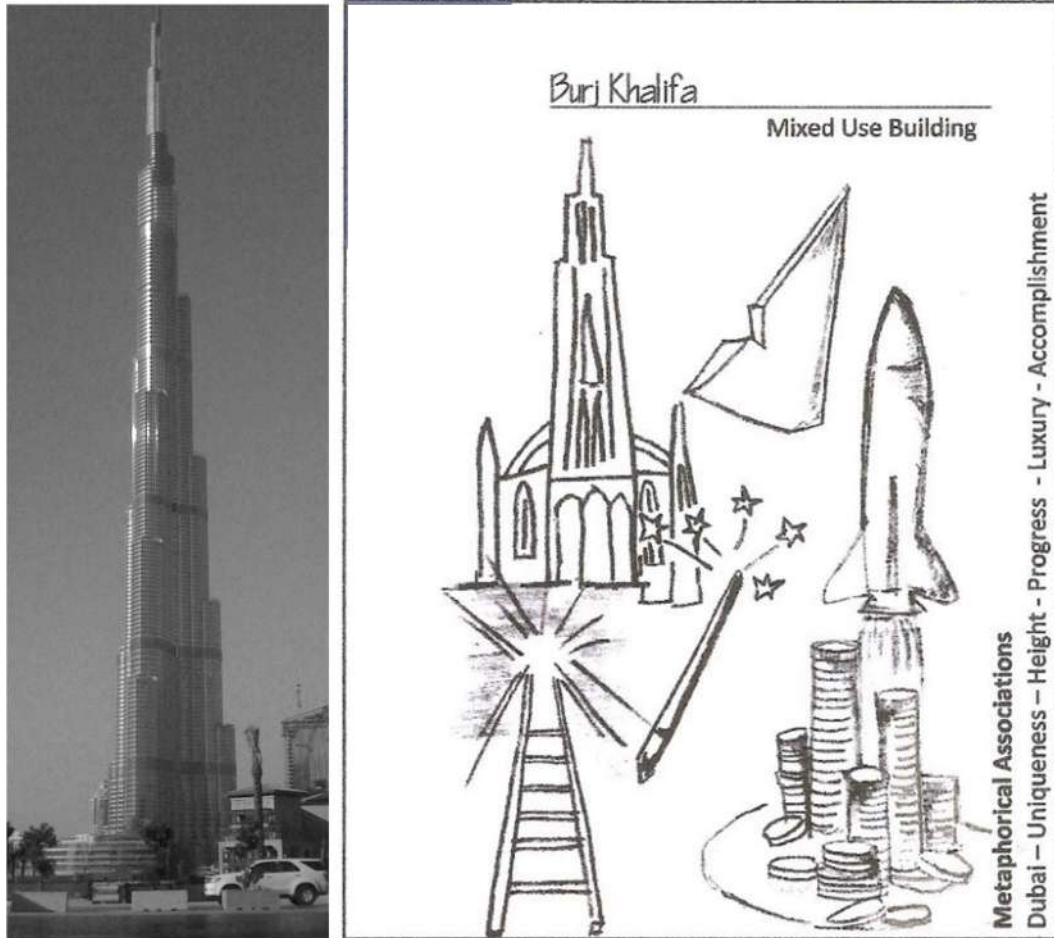


Figure 98 - Left, Burj Khalifa, Dubai - Right, Graphic Illustration of the most repeated descriptions of the Burj by Social Survey participants. Both by author.

7.5 Language: The Poetics of Sūq-ness in 20th/21st century Arabia

The urban case studies (section 7.3.1-7.3.3) examined the urban strategies employed for developing some Arab cities during the 20th century and portrayed how such strategies were influenced by Western models. Further influences were discussed through Dubai's social survey, which identified some persistent themes in Dubai's emerging socio-urban discourse. Aside from revealing an absence in the city's mythic outreach, the above studies still uncover very little about the traditional Sūq's position in Post-Islamic Arabia. Yet, it has been hinted that the subdued importance of traditional Arabian Sūqs today is possibly attributed to the space's incommensurability with modern-day needs. While the studies of Dubai and *Heliopolis* support this proposition, contemporary poetry and literature suggest otherwise. For, Arabian cities, and specifically their older Sūqs, have

been recurrent themes in the writings of many contemporary poets and novelists. While most of these works are characterized by strong nostalgic impulses, some of them are also critical of the region's social, political and cultural situation. Among the most romanticizing works of this era, Nizar Qabbani's (1923-1998) poem "Damascus What Are You Doing to Me?" presents itself as a leading example of nostalgic descriptions of the Arabian Sūq,

I open the drawers of memory... I remember my father coming out of his workshop on Mu'awiya Alley... I remember the horse-drawn carts... I remember the coloured towels as they dance on the door of Hammam al-Khayyatin, as if they were celebrating their national holiday... I remember the Damascene houses with their copper doorknobs and their interior courtyards that remind you of descriptions of heaven... The Damascene House is beyond the architectural text ... The design of our homes is based on an emotional foundation... For every house leans on the hip of another and every balcony extends its hand to another facing it... Damascene houses are loving houses... They greet one another in the morning and exchange visits secretly at night.⁶⁰⁶

Qabbani's poem describes the spatial, social and cultural memories that are associated with the experience of Arabian Sūqs, whose dancing towels, greeting houses and loving balconies establish the city's 'emotional foundation,' in relation to both earth and heaven. This idea is developed further in the works of other Arab poets, who extend the Sūq's significance beyond mere emotional attachment towards some deeper memories, suggesting that the Sūq and its parts are indivisible components of Arab identity and pride. This is described by Ahmed Lahbeel, when he states,

Oh, Fez my beloved ... You are a wound in my heart and a pain in my memory ... I am bleeding [of love] ... is there a cure? ... I embraced your land and it ran through my veins ... I smelled your breeze and it awakened sadness in my soul ... In the shade of your streets I remember the glorious days ... and in front of your gates I get infused with the greatness of my ancestors.⁶⁰⁷

⁶⁰⁶ Nizar Qabbani, "Damascus What Are You Doing to Me?" Allpoetry.com, <http://allpoetry.com/Damascus,-What-Are-You-Doing-to-Me-> (accessed September 12, 2016).

⁶⁰⁷ Ahmed Lahbeel, "Fas al-Habiba," Adab.com, <http://www.adab.com/folk/modules.php?name=Sh3er&doWhat=shqas&qid=86390&r=&rc=0>, (accessed Dec. 5, 2015). Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

يا فاس هافني حبك... يا جرحا في القلب ووجعا في الذاكرة... يا نزيفا... فهل من شفاء؟

Through Qabbani's and Lahbeel's work, it is understood that perception plays a big role in the Sūq's experience, allowing history and historical meanings to emerge through an engaged process of seeing, reflecting and reminiscing. Yet, Arabic poetry also reveals that the Sūq beholds more than the visual, where different sensory experiences make room for various revelations. This is understood in Nazik al-Malaika's verses, where she states,

In a foggy dream, I strolled along through an old Sūq... Drowned in rose water, the dreamy road expanded my sight and sprinkled sugar through my veins... My soul was drunk with the smell of spices, ivory coffers... and the colours of carpets with the smell of cardamom, henna, and vessels flooding with riches... I was drunk with lust, walking and asking where the shop of small Qurans is.⁶⁰⁸

Malaika's poem brings forth some important memories regarding the physical organization of Arabian Sūqs in relation to the mosque, describing the hierarchy of different shops in a similar way to the previously discussed Islamic accounts (sections 6.2 and 6.4). Moreover, Malaika's verses describe traditional Sūqs as places of sensory revelation, where an abundance of smell, touch, sight and sound reinforces the space's ability to create a constant feeling of being in-touch. This idea is also present in many of Mahfouz's novels, like *The Harafish* (originally published 1977), which recounts through its many tangled storylines the dynamics of social and religious governance in the older streets of Cairo and describes the role of embodied memories and sensory experience in grounding an Arab to space. The opening lines of the novel tell of a blind dervish, who

in the passionate dark of dawn... and within earshot of the beautiful, obscure anthems... He felt his way along with his rough

عانقت أرضك فتسربت روحها لدمائي... وتشممت عطر نسيمك
فتيقظت في قراري نفسي الأحزان
في ظلال دروبك أتذكر الأمجاد... وعند شموخ أبوابك
أنتشي كبرياء بعظمة الأجداد

⁶⁰⁸ Nazik al-Malaika, *Yughayir alwanoho al-bahr* (يغير ألوانه البحر), Arabic (Cairo: Al-Hayāa al-A'mah li Qussour al-Thaqafah, 1998), 95-96. Translation by author. Original Arabic text:

في ضباب الخُلم طوّفت مع السارين في سوق عتيق
غارق في عطر ماء الورد، وامتنّ طريقي
وسّع الخُلم عيوني، رش سُكَّرًا في عروقي
ثملت روعي بأشياء التوابل وصناديق العقيق... وبألوان السجاجيد
بعطر الهيل والحناء... بالآنية الغرقى الغلائل
سرقت روعي المرايا، واستدارات المكاحل
كنتُ نَسْوَى، في ازرقاق الخُلم أمشي وأسائل
أين دكان القرائين الصغيرة

stick, his guide in his eternal darkness. He knew where he was by the smell, by the number of steps he had taken, by how well he could hear the chanting, and by his own inspired instincts. Between his house by the graveyard and the alleys was the hardest but also the most delightful part of his route to the Husayn mosque.⁶⁰⁹

Here, Mahfouz's description proposes that the Sūq's sense of being in-touch transcends the limits of sensory experience, suggesting that the space's organization and memories present themselves as a form of practical knowledge. This proposition is expanded in Mahfouz's other novels, like *Khan al- Khalili* (1945), which explain how this knowledge is consolidated through the Arabian Sūq's normal as well as festive experiences. In his description the old Sūq's normal days, Mahfouz states, like

A long narrow street surrounded by square buildings, infiltrated by small alleyways that intersect the main street. The alleyways are congested with people, and the main street is buzzing with watchmakers, calligraphers, cafés, carpet sellers, tailors, antique shops ... etc. Here and there, under any building, are small coffee shops. The African porters, bawabeen, are positioned each in front of his allotted property, with their dark skins contrasted against their milky white head covers, with their dreamy eyes, as if intoxicated by the smell of perfumes and incense that is floating throughout the air. The sky is veiled by the shade of nearby buildings and their protruding balconies, preventing the sun from penetrating its way to the street.⁶¹⁰

Mahfouz's later descriptions of the Sūq's festive celebrations provides another dimension of the space, transforming it from a still-life portrait—like those of the English Orientalist tradition (section 4.5)—to a dynamic motion picture, where “earth and sky alike were decked out for the feat.”⁶¹¹

Most of the above poetics use some distinctly Islamic symbols and spatial references to describe the traditional Sūq, suggesting the persistence of space's Islamic understanding today. This possibly grants the space some historical legitimacy, reinforcing the value of its socially-shared memories, like the dancing

⁶⁰⁹ Naguib Mahfouz, *The Harafish*, translated by Catherine Cobham (Egypt: First Anchor Books, 1995), 1-2.

⁶¹⁰ Naguib Mahfouz, *Khan al-Khalili* (خان الخليلي), Arabic, 6th ed. (Cairo: Dar al-Shorouq, 2012), 8.

⁶¹¹ Mahfouz, *Khan al-Khalili*, 138.

towels, loving houses, prideful gates, sensory journey, incense filled air and noisy grounds. Still, by constantly gathering and organising these memories into a contemporary context, these poetic expressions also suggest that the traditional Arabian Sūq's experience allows a constant reciprocation between the space's embodied historical meanings and its present as well as latent social aspirations. This possibly explains the recurrence of the Sūq's analogy in describing many of the region's struggles, particularly the Arab-Israeli one, as discussed in many of Palestinian poet Fadwa Touqan's (1917- 2003) poems. In this regard, she states,

*Bats return once more to memory... here was the slave Sūq, here they sold my parents and my family ... Time has come for us to hear him [the American who supported the Israelis in 1967], who abolished slavery, calling upon a free man: who wishes to buy [a slave].*⁶¹²

Aside from political struggles, Arabic poetry also employs the Sūq's analogy to describe some of the region's current social problems, as depicted in Emirati poet Ibrahim Mohammed Ibrahim's following verses, which describe the alienating character of today's Arab cities and their waning identity,

*I could not see you at the city's gate, where people are crowding around a sugary hope, and you are still staring at the sea. At the city's gate, I bid farewell to my heart, delving into the city following passers-by, hoping to find someone who would buy an illusion [al-wahm], but there was none. I thought I would succeed in infusing some of our old values into the Sūq, hoping that the muggers would remember. I could not see you, and you did not see me or what I saw in this city. Signals refused to spread, there was no reasonable man here who could understand what I wanted or could understand the symbol. There was not even a passer-by, whose journey exhausted him, or stopped to share my agony, and I share his... so I can save him and myself, so I can confine in him my secret and he confines in me his... two secrets and two confinements in the middle of the Sūq, for the Sūq itself is a secret and a confinement.*⁶¹³

⁶¹² Fadwa Touqan, *Diwan Fadwa Touqan* (ديوان فدوى طوقان), Arabic (Beirut: Dar al-A'awdat, 1997), 273-274. Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

تعود الخفافيش للذاكرة...
هنا كان سوق النخاسة، باعوا هنا والدي وأهلي ... فقد جاء وقت سمعنا الذي
منع الرقّ والبيع نادى على الحر: من يشتري !

⁶¹³ Ibrahim Mohamed Ibrahim, "عند باب المدينة," Adab.com, <http://www.adab.com/modules.php?name=Sh3er&doWhat=shqas&qid=7036&r=&rc=7> (accessed April 20, 2018). Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

Through these poetic expressions, it is understood that the traditional Arabian Sūq is considered a symbol of Arabian identity, embodying its secrets, its essence and its memories. Sections 5.2 and 6.2 shed light on the various factors that affected the meaning of Arab-ness at two historical periods, suggesting that such identity is not as fixed as we currently assume it to be. So, what are the parameters of Arab identity today, as understood and perceived by Arabs?

Mahmoud Darwish's (1941 – 2008) poem “*Qafiyaton min ajli al-Mu'alakat*” (قافية من أجل المعلقات), offers a poetic answer to this question, stating,

No one guided me to myself, I am the guide; I am the guide in between the sea and the desert. From language I was born, on the Indian trade route, to two small tribes, upon which the moon of ancient religions and impossible peace shone. For, they had to safeguard an orbit of Persian proximity and a big Roman obsession. So, heavy times descended onto the Arabian tent, more... Who am I? This is a question for the others, and it has no answer. I am my language, I am a Mu'alakah [ancient Arabic poem], two ... ten... This is my language ... I am my language... This is my language and my miracle... My magic wand, my hanging gardens of Babylon and my Obelisk... My first identity and my true being... The Arab's sacred being in the desert, worshiping the qawafi [the end letters in an Arabic verse] flowing like stars on his cloak and worshiping what he utters...⁶¹⁴

فاتني أن أراك عند باب المدينة،
والناس كالنمل، يعتركون على الأمل السكري، وأنت تحرق في البحر.
عند باب المدينة ودعت قلبي، لأدخل مسترشداً بخطى العابرين،
لعلي أجد أحداً يشترى الوهم، لكنني لم أجد.
خلت أني سأفلق، في دس بعض النوايا القديمة في السوق،
خلت الصعاليك، لما يزل بعضهم يتذكر.
فاتني أن أراك، وفاتك مما رأيت بهذي المدينة أكثر،
أبت الإشارات، علّ ليبياً يعي ما أريد ويفطن للرمز،
أو سابلاً، أنهكت المسيرة، يلقي بأوزاره فوق وزري،
فأنجو به قبل أن أتعثّر، أو يتعثّر. أنوء بسري، ويحملني السر،
سرّان نحن وبوحان في كبد السوق والسوق سر وبوح

⁶¹⁴ Mahmoud Darwish, “قافية من أجل المعلقات,” in *Limatha tarkta al-hissan waheedan* (لماذا تركت)، 3rd ed. (Beirut: Al-Rayyes Books, 1995), 115.

Translation is proposed by author. Original Arabic text:

ما دلني أحد علي. أنا الدليل، أنا الدليل إلى بين البحر والصحراء. من لغتي ولدت
على طريق الهند بين قبيلتين صغيرتين عليهما قمر الديانات القديمة، والسلام المستحيل
وعليهما أن تحفظا فلك الجوار الفارسي وهاجس الروم الكبير، ليهبط الزمن الثقيل
عن خيمة العربي أكثر. من أنا؟ هذا سؤال الآخرين ولا جواب له. أنا لغتي أنا
وأنا معلقة... معلقان... عشر، هذه لغتي ... أنا لغتي... هذه لغتي ومعجزتي. عصا سحري
حدائق بابل ومسلتي، وهويتي الأولى ومعدني الصقيل ومقدس العربي في الصحراء... يعبد ما يسيل من القوافي كالنجوم على
عباءته... ويعبد ما يقول

Darwish's poem reckons that Arabic language is a chief characteristic of Arabian identity. By proposing so, he is not only responding to the era's new definition of Arab-ness (section 7.1) and its Nationalist spirit (section 7.2), but is possibly also attempting to explain the genesis of the imaginary historical gap between the Arabian Post-Islamic situation and its Pre-Islamic origin, where the desert and the trade route were considered chief spatial anchors. For, the poem sheds light on some of the previously discussed Pre-Islamic spatial references, like desert, trade route, tribe, moon, ancient religions and *Mu'alakah*. The poem also pays tribute to some of the region's architectural landmarks as well as its persistent political struggles, possibly suggesting that both space and time are mutable references, with Arabic language remaining the regions' chief source of identification. This view, which occupied much of Darwish's work, transformed him into an icon of nostalgia and resistance, instating Palestine, his homeland, as "a universal metaphor for the loss of Eden, for birth and resurrection, for the anguish of dispossession and exile."⁶¹⁵ By doing so, his work seems to symbolize the region's perpetual state of in-between-ness, which oscillates between present struggles and the 'magical' glories of a bygone past. To test this idea and its effects on the lived experience of traditional Sūqs, the following will focus on two important situations, the Sūq's festive experience and its ordinary daily life, using a 1960s puppet show and a set of in-depth interviews.

7.6 Post-Islamic Lived Experiences of Traditional Sūqs

The following sections will attempt to identify a series of trademark events that characterize a traditional Sūq's lived experience. By doing so, it would be possible to create a more focused interpretation of the Sūq's meaning in Post-Islamic Arabian consciousness, explaining whether and how its meaning has changed. Such investigation will also allow the research to fulfil its last objective of identifying the socially-constructed meaning of newly-emerging Arab cities, by

⁶¹⁵ Maya Jaggi, "Poet of the Arab World," *The Guardian*, June 8, 2002, <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2002/jun/08/featuresreviews.guardianreview19> (accessed Dec. 13, 2018)

means of cross-examining the previously discussed social perception of Dubai against those of the traditional Arabian Sūq.

7.6.1 Festive Rituals of Post-Islamic Arabia

The most celebrated Arabian street festival is the *Mawled*, an Islamic event dedicated to the birth of the Prophet (PBUH) or a Sufist Sheik, referred to as *al-Wali*. Probably the best portrayal of the *Mawled* festival is Salah Jahin's musical puppet show, titled '*Al-Lilah al-Kabirah*' (1960) or 'The Big Night.'⁶¹⁶ Jahin's show re-incarnates the idea of the Sūq festival not only as a kaleidoscopic assembly of various paraphernalia and events alone but also as an overlapping series of sub-stories, architectural settings and dialogical interactions that allow the puppets to move naturally along the stage's constructed passageway. The show starts with a large processional ceremony and the following chanting,

*The dome of the master has been lit ... how beautiful are its flags when people come visiting... The Dome of the master is high in the sky ... how beautiful are its flags when it is lit.*⁶¹⁷

The events transfuse from one place to another, showing different trading activities, such as the nuts' vendor calling people to taste his sizzling fresh products and the photographer intercepting passers-by to take a souvenir of the event. The sounds of vendors are gradually mixed then faded in the background. As the story unfolds, a major attraction reveals itself behind a portable theatre, inviting many children to gather and watch an *Arajouz* chanting,

*This is the big night, and there are many people, coming from the villages and the cities. Here are some peasants, and there are some villagers. These are from Canal cities and these are from Rashid [an Egyptian city]. This is the big night, and there are many people.*⁶¹⁸

⁶¹⁶ Salah Jahin, *Al-Lilah al-Kabirah*, directed by Salah al-Sakka, Masrah al-'Araes (1960), YouTube, 38:01, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r4SyIkPpIDY&list=RDr4SyIkPpIDY&index> (accessed September 21, 2017).

⁶¹⁷ Jahin, *Al-Lilah al-Kabirah*, 03:16-04:13. Translation is proposed by author. Arabic text:

قبة سيدنا الولي دول نوروها. ما أحلى البيارق والناس بيزوروها
قبة سيدنا الولي في الجو عالية. ما أحلى البيارق لما نوروها

⁶¹⁸ Ibid., 08:16-08:55. Translation is proposed by author. Arabic text:

الليلة الكبيرة ياعمي والعالم كتيرة. ماليين الشوادر يابا م الريف والبنادر.
دول فلاحين ودول صعايدة دول من القتال ودول رشايده



Figure 99 - Screen shot of the puppet show video, showing the entrance procession towards the mosque, with people carrying flags, lanterns, and musical instruments.

The *Arajouz* singing is then followed by a playful dialogue with a villager who seeks directions to the big mosque, ending with the success of the *Arajouz* in fooling the villager. The scene bombarded by the noisy background of vendor calls, proceeds to a different station, where a circus tent presides. The circus announcer attracts children by saying,

*In the circus there is a courageous man, who fights the lion and rides on it, say hooray!! (The Children say Hay, hay, hay) There are also gorgeous girls, sweet as syrup, so beautiful I do not know how, say hooray! (The Children say Hay, hay, hay) And also there is a clown, come to hear his jokes and to see what he will do, say hooray! (The Children say Hay, hay, hay).*⁶¹⁹

The circus scene ends, revealing further shop types and a variety of products on display. The calls of vendors are intercepted again by another event that is celebrated in one of the nearby houses, where the circumcision of a little boy is accompanied by the dancing and singing of family, neighbours and other festival

الليلة الكبيرة يا عمي والعالم كثيرة

⁶¹⁹ Jahin, *Al-Lilah al-Kabirah*, 13:12-13:38. Translation is proposed by author. Arabic text: في السيرك شجيع يهجم ع السبع ويركب دوغري عليه...قولوا هيه.. الأطفال: هيه هيه هيه المعن: وبنات قمرات زي الشربات حلوين مش عارف ليه...قولوا هيه.. الأطفال: هيه هيه هيه... المعن: وكمان بلياتشو تعالوا اسمعوا نتشه وشوفوا هيعمل أيه.. قولوا هيه الأطفال: هيه هيه هيه



Figure 100 - Shot of the puppet show, showing the *Arajouz* scene with the children and villager.

goers, representing the community's approval of the fulfilment of this religious mandate. The scene then moves to a coffee shop and portrays the owner, waiter and clients asking a singer to perform. Amidst the chanting, some clients move out of the coffee house to enjoy the many games and rides that are present on the festival's site, like the Ferris Wheel, swings and darts. Here, more characters emerge on the festival site, like dancers, singers, children, women and men. The closing act depicts two important events. The first is of a *munshid* (a religious singer) singing in a *zikr* circle,⁶²⁰

I saw the master [al-Wali] in my dream, so grand ... (the Chorus: so grand!) and a dove floating around him praying to God ... (the Chorus: light of the prophet!) I leaned over his hand and tried to kiss it ... (the Chorus: Kiss it!) ... they woke me up, so I came here [to celebrate his festival].⁶²¹

⁶²⁰ The *zikr* circle refers to a group of people who gather in concentric circles to sing and perform prayers.

⁶²¹ Jahin, *Al-Lilah al-Kabirah*, 32:52-33:25. Translation is proposed by author. Arabic text: شفت ف منام صاحب المقام. ده ابهه. المجموعة: ده ابهه. المنشد: ويمامة حايمه عليه تسبح ربها. المجموعة: يا نور النبي...يا نور النبي. المنشد: ميلت فوق يده وجيت أحبها. لمجموعة: أحبها. المنشد: صحووني م النوم خدت بعضي وتتي جي



Figure 101 - Shot from the puppet show, showing the coffee shop's owner, waiter, clients and *Rababah* singer.

The second is of a distressed woman seeking help to locate her missing daughter, who got lost in the *Mawled* festival. The show ends with the gradual escalation of prayer calls in the background and a blind dervish singing,

*It is very crowded ... How many children got lost!*⁶²²

The value of Jahin's puppet show rests not only on the comprehensive depiction of the *Mawled* activities as a set of visual images, but most importantly on its ability to identify a multiplicity of sensory experiences that are directly tied to the overall meaning of the *Sūq* festival. Examining Jahin's narrative, it is understood that the festive nature of the *Sūq* necessitates communal participation, which is dependent on individual situatedness as much as on the dialogical interaction between the members of the festival community. Accordingly, each participating individual 'plays-along' the *Sūq* game from a distinct viewpoint, depending on his own intentions, his familiarity with the event and his practical knowledge of the different possible dialogues he contributes to. Whether this dialogue is orchestrated through some physical (sensory) interactions, such as the

⁶²² Jahin, *Al-Lilah al-Kabirah*, 34:54-35:05. Translation is proposed by author. Arabic text: زحمة يا ولداه. كام عيل تاه.

sight of the flags, the smell of the sold goods and the hearing of various performances, or on some religiously mediated meanings, such as the circumcision scene, the villager's dream or the *zikr* circle, the Sūq festival is portrayed as a form of social play in both its literal and symbolic sense. On the one hand, the puppet show is in itself a performance, in which "the temporality of taking part for a time" allows the perceivers, or the audience of the show, to be fully immersed in its yet-to-be revealed meaning.⁶²³ On the other hand, the puppets, a prototypical interpretation of this audience, are hence "answering to the address of the work," reflecting more profoundly on some personal and communal memories that are related to the experience of the Sūq.⁶²⁴ This possibly explains why the show is inaugurated with a symbolic re-enactment of the Sufist idea of life as a purification journey, which is seen in the first act with flags, lanterns and the mosque silhouette foreshadowing the processions into the street.

By setting this festive mood, the temporality of the market place is framed in such a way that allows the different events of the street to unfold one after the other, suggesting that "the ordering of time occurs due to the returning of the festival" and not the other way around.⁶²⁵ Accordingly, it could be argued that the Sūq's ordering capacity moves beyond the everyday physical hierarchy of places, allowing the community to acquire a rhythmic progression through time as well as space.⁶²⁶ For, Jahin's show portrays how *al-Mawled* festival not only demarcates the spiritual path of the Sūq but also identifies the different social structures that would either enhance or deter one's personal as well as collective experience of the space. Such experience assumes participation, where every celebrating individual is expected to become an immersed player. Jahin's dialogues reinforce this idea, allowing the street festival to emerge as both an individualistic contemplative event and a shared universe of underlying meanings.

The movement from particular events to universal themes is depicted through almost all of the characters, who despite being active participants in the

⁶²³ Grondin, "Play, Festival and Ritual in Gadamer," 45.

⁶²⁴ Ibid.

⁶²⁵ Ibid., 46.

⁶²⁶ Ibid.

festival and are clearly espousing its festive mood still show variable intentions. This is portrayed in the example of the two male characters, *Mis'id* and 'Omara, whose interest in the festival is based on hunting every possible opportunity for gratuitous participation. By hovering over each scene in the show, the participation of *Mis'id* and 'Omara is characterized by some notoriousness, which is portrayed through their constant chasing of women in the street, their multiple attempts to enter the coffee shops and enjoy the performances without paying, and finally by 'Omara showing off his muscles in front of a *mashrabeya* window, behind which a young woman is watching the festival games. In contrast to this example, an important participant of the festival is the blind dervish, whose presence in most of the scenes is characterized by its religiously inclined statements, reminding people to pray for *Allah* and to ask for His favour. Aside from this religious position, the dervish is also portrayed as an active member of the festive community, walking in the streets, singing in the coffee shop and dancing in the *zikr* circle. This portrayal allows the dervish's symbolic presence to relay a multiplicity of meanings, owing to his participation as both a detached observer of everyday affairs and as an immersed player in the festival. This is also suggested through the dervish's closing statement that attests not only to the loss of the child, but possibly also to the displacement of the Sūq's social meaning in the context of Post-Islamic Arab cities.

To test the validity of the above in relation to the Sūq's current position, it is important to look beyond Jahin's limited theatrical portrayal. For, the show points beyond itself to a set of social and cultural experiences that are common in traditional Arabian Sūqs and are intensified with every returning festival, hence highlighting "the affective bond between people and place or setting."⁶²⁷ These common experiences include the street, the shops, the mosque, the food and the coffee shop. The animation of these daily experiences through the puppet show allows the spectators to imaginatively construct a sensory portrait of how it is to be in an Arabian Sūq, where the smell of freshly grilled walnuts, fish and almonds

⁶²⁷ Yi-Fu Tuan, *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perceptions, Attitudes and Values* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974), 4.

is mixed with the distinctive aroma of burning incense, and is occasionally intercepted with the malodorous presence of donkeys and horses. The auditory spectrum of the Sūq is even more enticing, with the sounds of shop vendors faded by the escalating hymns of prayer and *zikr* circles, the laughter of playful children followed by the shouts of scolding mothers, the voices of coffee shop singers accompanied by the lustrous jangles of the dancers' golden anklets, all silenced by the timely recurrence of the mosque's call for prayer. Similar to the previously discussed poetics (section 7.5), Jahin is thus implying that the Arabian Sūq's daily experience invigorates haptic senses, yet not through the direct action of touching, but rather through its ability to create a constant feeling of being in-touch. Such feeling is again dependent on the range of practical experiences one has with the Sūq. For instance, the prior knowledge that the consumption of pork and alcohol is prohibited in Islam explains the absence of their vendors in Jahin's show. Contrastingly, the show tells of particular food types that are considered a specialty of the Egyptian culinary tradition, such as *ta'miyah*, *fishah* and *mumbar*. Visual perception helps to encapsulate all these sensory experiences into a humanized whole, allowing the Sūq's everyday experience to acquire a more ocular-centric dimension, where the sound of the tricky *Arajouz* possibly reminds people of the city's multiple urban traps, the giggles of the young girls behind *mashrabeya* windows reinstates the community's cultural norms and the prayer calls reconfirms the centrality of the mosque to the Sūq's overall urban setting. This practical knowledge of the Sūq's everyday experience endows people with an understanding of being-in-space and grants them the gift of communal development through active communication and festive participation.



Figure 102 - Screen shot of the puppet show video, portraying 'Omara showing off his muscles in front of the girl's window, while the game conductor and some children are watching.



Figure 103 - Screen shot of the puppet show video, showing Mis'id, 'Omara, and the blind dervish celebrating on the market stage with other people. The swing is shown at the back.

Figure 104 - Left, Sūq in Aswan (Egypt) showing a man walking in front of his horse-cart crossing the narrow paths. Right, swings placed in the middle of al-Moez Street in Cairo during the Mawled festival.



7.6.2 Post-Islamic Sūq-ness in-between Tradition and Modernity

The previously discussed poetics and rituals of traditional Sūqs (sections 7.5 and 7.6.1) point to a multiplicity of mythic ideas that are related to the space's sensory experience and embodied meanings. These mythic ideas include dreams (Malaika), procession (Jahin and Mahfouz), light (Jahin), secret (Ibrahim), language (Darwish), glorious past (Darwish and Lahbeel) and slavery (Toukan). Whether such ideas denote a form of narrative discourse—from the Greek term *mythos*—that defines a set of shared ‘scared stories, poetic fancies or even some reciprocated lies,’ the importance of these mythic ideas here is grounded on their effects in shaping Post-Islamic Arabian consciousness.⁶²⁸ Because the case studies (section 7.3) offer a divergent view of Post-Islamic Arab cities to that described in poetry and novels, it is important to test whether such poetic discourses behold some form of social ‘truth’ that can assist in revealing the meaningful-ness of the traditional Arabian Sūq today. This is hinged on the argument that “there is much at stake in the words people use and how they happen to use them, just as there is

⁶²⁸ Bruce Lincoln, *Theorizing Myth: Narrative, Ideology, and Scholarship* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), ix.

much at stake in the stories they tell and how those stories get told.”⁶²⁹ Since poetry is not the only source of such *mythos*, the following will analyse the findings of nine (9) interviews, conducted in the Sūqs of Dubai and Cairo.

7.6.2.1 Interview: Methodological Process and Application

As noted in section 3.4.2, the interviews are an important evidence collection method for understanding the Sūq’s meaning in Post-Islamic Arabia, since they play a mediating role between the perception of the Post-Islamic city’s modern image and the experience of its older traditional market streets. The interview’s question sheet was drafted based on the findings of sections 7.4 and 7.5, seeking an in-depth understanding of the Sūq’s daily lived experience as it is today. So, the questions targeted three areas: the Sūq’s spatial organization, the Sūq’s activities and sensory experience, and the Sūq’s embodied meanings.⁶³⁰ The semi-structured interview questions revolved around 8 topics, including, 1) the recurrence and reason for visiting traditional Sūqs; 2) the activities undertaken; 3) the dress code or special preparations made for the visit; 4) the types of food/drinks consumed; 5) the people they go with or talk to in the Sūq; 6) the things they see or enjoy seeing; 7) the difference between the traditional Sūq and the Mall; and finally 8) their most enduring memory of a traditional Arabian Sūq.

After acquiring Ethical clearance from DMU, the researcher made several visits to traditional Sūqs in Dubai and Cairo to locate possible participants. The participants’ sample was purposefully chosen based on two criteria: 1) balanced male/female points of view to minimize unsupported gender-related generalizations; 2) seeking different Arab nationals, to test the persistence of some larger themes across different Arabian regions.⁶³¹ Upon their acceptance to take part, participants were given a copy of the proposed questions, Participants’

⁶²⁹ Lincoln, *Theorizing Myth: Narrative, Ideology, and Scholarship*, ix.

⁶³⁰ A copy of the Interview’s Questionnaire is attached in Appendix 11.A.1

⁶³¹ Catherine Marshall and Gretchen B. Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 5th ed. (Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2011), 103. These criteria are inspired from Marshall’s advice that a small sample size is possibly adjusted through the inclusion of “reasonable variation in the phenomenon, settings, or people.”

Information Sheet and Participants' Consent Forms.⁶³² The interview venue was decided by the participant, optimizing the comfortable casual intent of the process. Before the start of the interview itself, participants were reminded of the voluntary nature of the study and their right to withdraw at any point, assuring that their identities will remain anonymous as reflected in the transcripts in Appendix 11.A and in the footnotes. Audio recording was used during the process for purposes of evidence storage and transcription.

As for the interviewing process itself, the researcher remained faithful to the general topics outlined in the semi-structured questions' sheet, still allowing each question to be remodelled, expanded or deferred in response to the participant's answers, as recommended by Creswell.⁶³³ By doing so, the researcher adhered to the conventions of phenomenological interviewing (section 3.4.5), intending the uninterrupted narration of the participants' experiences and memories, where "all questions flow from the dialogue as it is rather than having been determined in advance."⁶³⁴ The open-ended nature of the interview was also maintained by the researcher's participation in the dialogue, either through agreement, asking for detailed examples and probing through contrasting opinion. Accordingly, the interview sought a particular, personal and detailed description of the Arabian Sūq's daily lived experience as perceived by the interviewees, whose number is in accordance with the average sample size recommended by Creswell, Dukes, Morse and Polkinghorne.⁶³⁵ The interviews then intended an in-depth and prolonged engagement with the interviewees' stories, which were to be

⁶³² John Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*, 3rd ed. (Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2013), 165-166. A copy of these documents is available in Appendix 11.A.

⁶³³ Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 160.

⁶³⁴ Howard R. Pollio, Tracy Henley and Craig B. Thompson, *The Phenomenology of Everyday Life: Empirical Investigations of Human Experience* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 30.

⁶³⁵ Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 157. Here, Creswell discusses the following observations from a pool of diverse studies, claiming that Polkinghorne (1989) used one phenomenological interview in some case studies. Creswell also notes that Dukes (1984) prescribes the need of 3 to 10 subjects. Yet, Morse (1994) recommends at least six participants "in studies where you're trying to understand the essence of experience."

collaborated with other types of evidences, including the narratives provided by poetry, novels, advertisements and the puppet show.⁶³⁶

7.6.2.2 Interview: Results and Preliminary Interpretation

Similar to the previously discussed poetics, many participants showed a strong emotional/nostalgic connection to the traditional Arabian street, or the Old Medina (old town) as called by IA, Tunisian flight attendant, who claims that this is “our culture and that’s where we belong.”⁶³⁷ Similarly, MA, Iraqi marketing executive who lived most of his life outside of Iraq, believes that the Sūq’s emotional value resides in its ability to connect Arabs with their history, old tradition and culture, evoking “a nice era, nice time, when things were simpler, people were nicer, shop owners friendlier, things were outside displayed in the old way... It gives me that feeling that things are natural, are real.”⁶³⁸ Comparable expressions were given by MF, Jordanian housewife, who believes that the old Sūq allows people “to get closer to the culture of that country or that city ... they will not feel the connection if they only go to a mall. You have to have something old to connect with, then you get the feel of it.”⁶³⁹ Similarly, NH, Palestinian housewife, states that she visits Arabian Sūqs “to explore the authenticity of the actual space, to experience the actual culture, look at the architecture, see what kinds of food... it’s a full experience.”⁶⁴⁰ Retired Egyptian beauty consultant, HI, also notes that “the old Sūq in any country reflects the nature of the people who live there.”⁶⁴¹ She further expresses her love for Sūqs, explaining,

*For me, they make me feel happy. They are full of life, with the loud vendors and loudly talking people, moving in and out of shops. They [Sūqs] have different layouts, but they are all lively and happy places... People are always walking, talking and laughing... the vendors are calling and bargaining.*⁶⁴²

⁶³⁶ Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 162.

⁶³⁷ IA, interview by author, Dubai, Oct. 7, 2018, Appendix 11-A7, section 3.

⁶³⁸ MA, interview by author, Dubai, Sept. 19, 2018, Appendix 11-A6, section 5.

⁶³⁹ MF, interview by author, Dubai, Sept. 17, 2018, Appendix 11-A4, section 5.

⁶⁴⁰ NA, interview by author, Dubai, Sept. 17, 2018, Appendix 11-A5, section 5.

⁶⁴¹ HI, interview by author, Dubai, March 21, 2019, Appendix 11-A11, section 3.2.

⁶⁴² HI, interview, Appendix 11-A11, section 11:4.

While the participants' experiences varied depending on the geographic location(s) they frequented, ideas like 'old tradition' and 'authenticity' were recurrent themes permeating most of their narratives. The following will discuss other themes that were identified in the participants' responses in relation to their spatial, sensory and cultural meaningfulness. These categories along with their respective themes/sub-themes are outlined in tables at the end of this section.

For most participants, the Sūq's spatial experience symbolizes the Arabian city's 'raw beginnings' and its core foundation, allowing the walls and gates of the old city to demarcate the Sūq's physical boundaries and to relay a sense of reassurance to its visitors/residents, who according to IA, "won't get lost reaching there because once you see these walls you know, even if you are 30km away, that this is the Old Medina, which means the Sūq."⁶⁴³ Accordingly, it is suggested that the symbolism inherent in the Arabian Sūq's gates and walls transcends these structures' physical presence, pointing to a deeper need to-be-found on both physical and mental levels. Such need is further expressed through the participants' responses regarding their activities, which encompass a lot of walking through the narrow alleys, exploration of the small shops and hunting for "hidden treasures."⁶⁴⁴ The idea of 'hidden treasures' denotes different meaning for different participants, ranging from traditional products that "you won't find anywhere else except in the Sūq," to artworks, fascinating buildings and alleyways, social bonds and multiple sensory experiences.⁶⁴⁵ In describing his walk throughout Iraqi Sūqs, MA states that,

*you see the building, you see the people, you see the outlets, you see people selling all sorts of stuff: books to shoes, the food, it's just so much to take in as an experience... I see a lot, I see history. I start imagining how people used to live, how people used to talk from these balconies, and they are in a very old design.*⁶⁴⁶

Likewise, the other participants' descriptions of the Sūq's narrow alleys uncover a heightened attention to detail that moves beyond the space's general ambiance of

⁶⁴³ IA, interview, Appendix 11-A7, section 4:3.

⁶⁴⁴ MF, interview, Appendix 11-A4, section 16.

⁶⁴⁵ IA, interview, Appendix 11-A7, section 4.

⁶⁴⁶ MA, interview, Appendix 11.A6, section 11.

“how the carts are being organized, the way people are moving around, the way spices are being displayed (NH),” towards the more complex character of the space as a gathering of “different corners, different pieces of art, [and] different feelings of people (MF).”⁶⁴⁷ In this regard, Egyptian architect SN notes that the power of the traditional Sūq architecture resides not in its instrumental use or formalistic articulation alone but in its different modes of social outreach, emphasizing that the Arabian Sūq “is the street itself and not the shops, [because] people put their products not in the shops but in the street.”⁶⁴⁸ To him, this creates a dynamic socio-urban relationship that is based on the dissolution of physical barriers between the street strollers and shop vendors, allowing for the “activation of the [Sūq’s] passage.”⁶⁴⁹ For this reason, he believes that the Sūq’s horizontality—as opposed to the mall’s verticality—contributes greatly to the space’s social experience, letting “the shops to open up and extend in the street or in the public realm.”⁶⁵⁰ This possibly explains why many respondents, including Lebanese business woman LD, see the street as the most important part of the Sūqs, which is not only a place for exploring and buying traditional items but is mainly an open playground for diverse social interactions. These interactions include talking to strangers, haggling with vendors and listening to the shop owners’ stories.⁶⁵¹ In this way, the old Sūq projects the region’s long heritage, identity and diversity, which, according to many participants, can be experienced through the space’s architecture, layout and its shop owners’ stories. In this regard, IA notes that,

Every shop has its story... You will find that old man, still he is alive, and he will tell you “you know me 30 years and my grandpa 100 years ago”... You are talking about shops that exist from the mid-ages. So, yes, it’s a heritage... We have the Roman empire, Almohad empire, we have the Byzantine empire, we have the Fatimid empire. So, all of this you will find it in the Sūq because every one of them left its prints... till now we kept it as it is because

⁶⁴⁷ NA, interview, Appendix 11-A5, section 14 and MF, interview, Appendix 11-A4, section 5.

⁶⁴⁸ SN, interview by author, Dubai, Sept. 25·2018, Appendix 11-A8, section 1.

⁶⁴⁹ SN, interview, Appendix 11-A8, section 1:1.

⁶⁵⁰ SN, interview, Appendix 11-A8, section 2:1.

⁶⁵¹ LD, interview by author, Dubai, Oct. 16, 2018, Appendix 11A.10, section 3:1.

*it's our identity and we are proud of it and it shouldn't be touched by modernity and by the new businessmen and capitalism.*⁶⁵²

This comment finds reverberating echoes in MA's descriptions of Iraqi Sūqs and their architecture, which includes a mixture of Islamic, British and Jewish styles, noting that, "Jews occupied a very big part in Baghdad's history, they were very well off and that area of the Sūq was very well off and you see this in the design and the structures."⁶⁵³ A similar comment is found in 69-year old Palestinian Engineer MK, who describes the Sūq at his hometown of Nablus, noting the inseparable bond between its local Muslim, Christian and Jewish residents. In this regard, he notes,

*The Jews, particularly those of the Sameri sect, are kind neighbours and they have an important district in the Sūq of Nablus. They are Palestinians and they love their country and their people. They are famous for bookmaking and fortune-telling.*⁶⁵⁴

The above statements extend the Sūq's spatial potential to include not only the physical but also the social, suggesting that the 'beauty' of the Sūq is grounded on its ability to gather different people from different religious and ethnic backgrounds. MA nostalgically notes, "we reminisce about these good times when Baghdad and its Sūqs were beautiful. Look, the people who go to the traditional market or Sūqs, what I observe is that they are really educated people who long for a good past."⁶⁵⁵

Still, the epitome of the Sūq's spatial experience to many participants is the coffee shop or *Qahwa*, which represents a communication channel for most Sūq goers. Participants' responses suggest that each Arabian Sūq has its signature old coffee shop, like *al-Fishawi* in Cairo, *al-Shawasheen* in Tunisia and *al-Shahbandar* in Baghdad. The coffee shop for most is an enjoyable station for tired strollers, cold wanderers and curious tourists. IA notes that,

People used to go this Shawasheen Qahwa [Tunis] because it's winter and it's very cold; they have this little cheminée, we call it kanoon actually, where there is this little fire. So, people used to go there to feel warm, to have this nice tea, green tea of course... I

⁶⁵² IA, interview, Appendix 11-A7, sections 5 and 4:2.

⁶⁵³ MA, interview, Appendix 11A.6, section 11:1.

⁶⁵⁴ MK, interview, Appendix 11A.12, section 9.

⁶⁵⁵ MA, interview, Appendix 11A.6, section 11:3.

don't know why the atmosphere there is different, very sociable. You feel like we are in the old days; everybody loves each other; somehow people, which is very true, as if we are now again together. You have this feeling. This is our identification... You talk to anyone because there are no tables, it's like a big table where everybody can join. Today, it's like three or four big tables, this big [hand gesture to simulate the size] and you are seated with everyone, so 100% you will start communicating, talking and socializing. And once you sit, the waiter will start bringing tea, there is no menu, no nothing, you are there, everybody knows, you are there for the tea. So, he brings the tea, and of course in the very old traditional cups, because there are no other cups, they are made in nhass [copper]. It's an experience, it's lovely, actually you see when I am saying this I miss it [she gets watery eyes], I wanna go there during the winter.⁶⁵⁶

IA's emotional story was similar to MA's account of Baghdad's coffee shop, feeling sudden 'goosebumps' after describing it as follows,⁶⁵⁷

there is a very old coffee shop, it's very famous actually, it's called 'Shahbandar.' That's a coffee shop since the 40s, you go there and see old pictures of all the famous people who used to be there. So, I see pictures of Um Kulthoum [famous Egyptian singer of the 40-60s era] when she went to Baghdad. It's a place where the old generation still go, and you would sit there and have your tea... I am sorry my hair stood... I got goosebumps [giggles].... So, you sit there, and you enjoy your cup of tea and you would hear them talking about their analysis of how did this generation come out different from them, reminiscing about old times, listening to music in the background, the old traditional music [cough] Even the side table designs are very old wooden structures with paint, the seating is made out of benches with a mattress on it, you know the old traditional one, with a gramophone actually playing... Trust me, the tea is served in a saucer, it is thrown to you, but when you drink it you feel wow that is the best tea I have ever drunk [small giggle]. You know how it's made, you see it, the water is being boiled on charcoal, not on an electric stove.⁶⁵⁸

In describing *al-Fishawi* coffee shop in Cairo, Egyptian Engineer AA, states that,

Al-Fishawi Café, it is very known and everyone visiting this area will have to stop to have tea or coffee or to play backgammon or chess. And if you like to smoke shisha you can try there as well. It is located at the entrance of the whole Sūq, so it is very very famous... [They have] very small metal tables, it's the traditional

⁶⁵⁶ IA, interview, Appendix 11A.7, sections 9 and 9:1.

⁶⁵⁷ MA, interview, Appendix 11A.6, section 9:1.

⁶⁵⁸ MA, interview, Appendix 11A.6, section 9:1.

table in local Egyptian coffee shops, it's called 'taqtouqa,' and there are some bigger tables if you like to play chess or backgammon. The vendors will come to clean shoes, for example, or to sell any of their products like emmm... souvenirs for tourists [pause] that's it... [There is] music, the traditional Egyptian music and they put some TV's if there is a game, so people can watch, but this is not the purpose, not the main purpose for going to this place. You go there to drink something and talk.⁶⁵⁹

The above descriptions identify visibility as the most important factor in the Sūq's sensory experience. Yet, for most participants, visibility denotes not the display of goods or the sight of architectural details alone but most importantly the process of doing things. This includes the coffee shop waiters preparing drinks, the mobile food vendors chopping their goods, the craftsmen working in front of their small shops and the residents chatting across their balcony enclaves. Such visibility allows for a constant interaction between the different street players, adding to the richness of the Sūq's sensory experience, where taste, sound and aroma play imperative roles. While these sensory dimensions have been repeatedly present in many of the previously discussed poems and in Jahin's puppet show, the participants detailed descriptions of the Sūq's aromatic spectrum uncovers important information about the traditional Sūq. According to the interviewees, each Sūq has an aromatic stamp depending on the types of sold merchandise, like spices, leather, soap, meat, oil ...etc. IA affirms that, "when I say the street of leather, you will not find anything which is not leather... Even the smell of leather, you start to smell it even when you are far away, you know you are going through the leather market."⁶⁶⁰ Comparably, many participants portrayed intense enthusiasm in describing the variety of food types that are offered in the Arabian Sūq. Even though each participant described his/her pleasurable experience of different local specialties, such as *Ka'k* or *Kubbah* in Iraq, *Lupin* or *Knafe* in Nablus, *Bambaloni* in Tunis, *Date Pastries* in Jerusalem, *Lguemat* in Dubai and *Cane Juice* in Cairo, they all agreed on the intensity of the street food's sensory experience. According to many of them, the real difference

⁶⁵⁹ AA, interview by author, Cairo, Sep. 22, 2018, Appendix 11A.9, sections 11:1, 11:5, 12:2, 12:3.

⁶⁶⁰ IA, interview, Appendix 11A.7, section 7:1.

between the food offered in the Sūq as opposed to modern restaurants lies in the transparency of the process, where you can always see the “man who bought the meat fresh in the morning and you actually see the ingredients of how things are being prepared and being cooked right in front of you. That’s the beauty of it.”⁶⁶¹ MF also exclaimed, “the speed at which they serve you is unbelievable and the confidence... well actually seeing them doing it is more unbelievable... they don’t even look doing it they are like *tchuk tchuk tchuk* you know, and your plate is done.”⁶⁶² Still, these positive responses were not unanimous, since some respondents questioned the cleanliness of the food, many of which is not covered. LD explains this, stating,

*You are in an open market, so some of the food is displayed on the shelves and some packed. Some of them is being just prepared... I wouldn’t take a cup of tea there, for example. They don’t have disposable cups. They just wash it with little water, they just put few drops in it, move it right and left, throw the water out and fill it for another person to drink from. So, I would never try something like that!*⁶⁶³

A similar observation is offered by HI, who despite her enthusiasm for trying the Sūqs’ array of traditional foods and drinks, would not purchase one from a mobile vendor because “he pours the juice from a glass or copper vessel that he carries on his back... The cups he uses are carried in his pocket... I get scared that they might not be clean.”⁶⁶⁴ Aside from these hygiene issues, the Sūq’s food for many of the other participants beholds a strong sense of identification and authenticity,

because usually when you go to these Sūqs you find the cook, he is the person who has been working there and he is probably the owner of the shop, he has been there forever, the recipe has been done a hundred times, he cooks it with his soul and heart... it’s so hearty food, it’s done with a touch of love and passion... even the plates, you know, those old tin plates and saucers. The tea comes in those short glasses the way our grandfathers used to drink it not in the new cups and stuff, so you really come out of there and you are like this is one of the best meals I have ever had... It is made with love. It really takes me back to the time when I used to visit my grandmother and grandfather and I start remembering these

⁶⁶¹ MA, interview, Appendix 11A.6, section 8:2.

⁶⁶² MF, interview, Appendix 11A.4, section 11:2.

⁶⁶³ LD, interview, Appendix 11A.10, sections 10 and 10:1.

⁶⁶⁴ HI, interview, Appendix 11A.11, section 7:1.

*moments. And to me living in the past is really enjoyable because people were more authentic, things were more real, we didn't have all these foods that are done with chemicals.*⁶⁶⁵

This last quote brings forth the cultural dimension of the Arabian Sūq's experience. For, many of the participants claimed that the Sūq experience is parallel to 'a walk with history' (MA), a parade of pleasurable times (MF) and a series of meaningful events (IA). This is best portrayed in IA's description of the seven-days marriage rituals, almost all of which take place in the Old Medina. According to her, the first day is usually at the bride's house, where she celebrates with her family members and relatives, preparing her '*trousseau*' and ironing her clothes. The second day, the bride and her female family members visit *Sūq al-Berkah*, or Sūq of Gold, where she makes many valuable purchases. She further notes that, "it's kind of a tradition for us, she has to, it's a *Kutum*, it's a *habitude*, to go there to buy the gold because if she doesn't buy the gold from *Sūq al-Berkah*, somehow the marriage is not completed."⁶⁶⁶ The third day, they go to the *hammam* in *Sūq al-Dirah* to perform the bridal cleansing rituals. The fourth day, they go to *Sūq al-Benat* to get the ingredients of the *harquus*, a traditional herbal mixture with a beautiful smell that is used for drawing tattoo. The Fifth day, they go to *Sūq al-Attareen*, or the Spice market, to buy the bride a large basket or '*Kouffa*,' containing different aromatic products, such as henna, incense and cosmetics. The Sixth day is for the groom and his male friends only, so no women are allowed to enter in the Sūq. The last day is the wedding ceremony, where Arabic sweets and drinks are offered throughout the Sūq. A similar account is offered in MK's detailed description of his Sūq experiences and observations during his childhood, remembering the bridal carts roaming the Sūq of Nablus and the merchants distributing sweets during Islamic Ramadan and Jewish Easter.⁶⁶⁷ The Sūq's festive nature was also implied in HI's descriptions of Marrakesh's Sūq, whose experience includes walking, talking with vendors, buying Moroccan *abayas* or glazed pottery, participating in the sunset tea ritual in

⁶⁶⁵ MA, interview, Appendix 11A.6, section 8:2.

⁶⁶⁶ IA, interview, Appendix 11A.7, section 4.

⁶⁶⁷ MK, interview, Appendix 11A.12, sections 5:1, 8 and 11:1.

addition to watching rooster fights, snake dances and folkloric shows.⁶⁶⁸ Through these rituals, the Sūq emerges as a series of cultural events, whose meanings are historically as well as socially negotiated. This is accentuated in some other cultural descriptions of the Sūq, which suggest its barrier-free attire, its collective nature and intimate memories, as claimed by MA when talking about his preparations for visiting the Sūq,

*if I am visiting a traditional Sūq then I usually don't like to dress up I really dress down cuz I wanna go with the flow, I really wanna be in touch with the surroundings and how things look. You know, you can overpower these things if you were wearing a suit and you go there, you are out of context, you don't feel the thing.*⁶⁶⁹

He further notes,

*These places don't have the barriers that are imposed by modern societal structures, no... When I go to the coffee shop, I sit, you know they don't have tables, there are long benches. So, you would have like four benches, every two facing each other like a square. And you can hear the person next to you talking to the person next to him, and you talk to the person diagonally ... it becomes like sitting in a living room where everyone is talking, everyone is just so natural.*⁶⁷⁰

Similar descriptions are offered by HI and NH, when recalling their most enduring memories of the old Sūq. NH stated that in Nablus,

*I was with a group of friends, and we got a little tired of walking, so we ended up in an alley, sitting on the floor and started laughing like idiots. Beautiful weather, feeling free and there was nothing to impose on you like, you know, those daily routines.*⁶⁷¹

For HI, her most enduring memory was of the vendors of Sūq *al-Hamidia* in Damascus. She remembers, rather shyly,

In Sūq al-Hamidia, the way the vendors show off products is so unique without actually bothering people... In front of every shop the vendors stand on chairs, calling people to come and see their products... They sell something called 'the clapping panty' or abu-Saāfa [giggles] and they call the name in the middle of the Sūq... This is made for young brides. When you go inside the shop the

⁶⁶⁸ HI, interview, Appendix 11A.11, sections 6 and 6:1.

⁶⁶⁹ MA, interview, Appendix 11A.6, section 6.

⁶⁷⁰ MA, interview, Appendix 11A.6, section 10.1.

⁶⁷¹ NA, interview, Appendix 11A.5, section 16.1.

*vendor makes a demonstration how the thing works, and it is a very funny experience.*⁶⁷²

The intimacy portrayed through the above narratives, symbolized by the laughter, communication and celebrations, accentuates the space's collective nature, becoming not only a communal 'living room' that gathers different artefacts, products, people and activities but also different stories, sub-stories and settings. This communality is portrayed in LD's tea preparation story as much as in most of the described coffee shops' seating layouts. It is also suggested in MK's memoir of Nablus's women-only coffee shops, which he describes as,

*The women also have they own coffee shops in the Nablus Sūq, but these are called 'kamouniah.' These are reached from inside the Sūq itself through a small passageway that leads to an open courtyard planted with trees and decorated with fountains. In these spaces, women can also have tea, coffee and nargeela... In these gatherings, women usually bring with them home-made pastries or sweets to share with other women. These places also serve as celebration spaces or rendezvous venues, where women can gather in large numbers outside their homes for different social purposes. Many engagement arrangements happen there too, when one woman sees another's daughter and proposes to have her marry her son for instance. See, the Kamouniah was very important for women, allowing them a venue for entertainment, connection and relaxation after shopping. The social life was very beautiful and warm; it was simple indeed but still very beautiful.*⁶⁷³

Such communality is also implied through the constant eavesdropping and intervention of mobile vendors as well as in the cultural protocols prescribed by being-in-the-Sūq, which include 'decent clothing' and bargaining rituals.⁶⁷⁴ Understanding these protocols is one aspect of the space's practical knowledge, as suggested in LD's statement that "we have to respect the people that are there, because most people in the Sūqs they have different traditions. So, when you are wearing decently you accommodate everyone's thinking and their lifestyle."⁶⁷⁵ As for the bargaining tradition, both LD and HI confirm that,

⁶⁷² HI, interview, Appendix 11A.11, sections 11 and 11:1.

⁶⁷³ MK, interview, Appendix 11A.12, section 7:2.

⁶⁷⁴ LD, interview, Appendix 11A.10, section 5. Information on the mobile vendors' intervention and eavesdropping can be also found at the epilogue of Appendix 11A.8 and in HI's description of coffee shops section 3:5.

⁶⁷⁵ LD, interview, Appendix 11A.10, section 5.

When you ask about a price, you know that they are putting a higher price because they know that people will bargain. So, you just have to throw half the price there. And you tell them no I will take it for half the price, and they go like we cannot sell you at this price. So, you go up and they go down until you reach a good deal. It's fun, it's part of the experience as well.⁶⁷⁶

These narratives suggest that vendors play a big social role in the overall fun-filled Sūq-game, acting as mediators between the Sūq's ritualistic trading events and the space's constructed narratives. According to MF and IA, every vendor at every shop has a story and he is "happy to tell you about it," while assisting you to find the best thing that suits your needs.⁶⁷⁷ HI further explains that the behaviour of vendors differs from one Arab city to the other, ranging from constant nagging, as in *Khan al-Khalili*, to mild persuasions, as in Lebanon. Despite some of the discomfort brought forth by the impositions of some vendors, she emphasizes that Arab vendors of Cairo, Damascus, Beirut, Marrakesh and Medina, are very warm, welcoming and very hospitable, if compared to their Turkish counterparts in the Grand Bazaar for instance.⁶⁷⁸ She relegates the warmth and pleasant attitude of most Arab vendors to her belief that "we all know each other and share the same values. Arab vendors understand Arabian social-cultural norms and we all know the proper way to act with each other."⁶⁷⁹ MK's responses add another important dimension to the historical role of vendors in traditional Sūqs, protecting buyers and ensuring their pleasurable and fair shopping experiences (section 4.6). In this regard, he notes,

each part of the Sūq has its own leader, or fotouwa, whose job is to follow up on the commercial transactions of his particular profession. So, if any customer comes to him complaining about any trader, his responsibility is to reconcile between people and to punish cheaters.⁶⁸⁰

This possibly explains why many of the respondents see in the Sūq some forgotten signs of communal solidarity, where "every vendor is your father, your

⁶⁷⁶ LD, interview, Appendix 11A.10, section 6:4 – HI, interview, Appendix 11A.11, section 8:1.

⁶⁷⁷ IA, interview, Appendix 11A.7, section 9.2 and MF, interview, Appendix 11A.04 section 17.

⁶⁷⁸ HI, interview, Appendix 11A.11, section 6:6.

⁶⁷⁹ HI, interview, Appendix 11A.11, section 9:2.

⁶⁸⁰ MK, interview, Appendix 11A.12, section 5.

grandfather, everybody is your brother, every woman you see in the street going to buy stuff for her daughter for her wedding is somehow your mother or your grandmother.”⁶⁸¹

So, the traditional Arabian Sūq’s spatial, social and cultural value today seems to reside in its ability to connect the Arabian community to its local tradition and origin. Similar to Jahin’s puppet show, the interviews reveal that the experience of the Sūq not only creates a constant feeling of being-in-touch with Arabian history and culture but constitutes in itself an imperative ingredient in the Arabian understanding of togetherness and identity. For the interviews imply that the Arabian Sūq’s experience endows its dwellers with a sense of being found, allowing them “to establish the exact location of where in today’s ground the ancient treasures have been stored up,” to quote Walter Benjamin.⁶⁸² Unlike Jahin’s show, which fell short in locating the present meaningfulness of the Arabian Sūq’s experience, the interviews suggest that the authenticity of the Sūq’s spatial experience resides in the embodied memories of the space and the meanings given to them by each individual experience. Whether it is a memory of a tasty meal, a heartfelt laughter or a curious gaze, the traditional Arabian Sūq’s socially constructed meaning depends on the level of visibility sought by each Sūq goer. At some instances, the patterns of daily lived experience remain confined within the perceptual/sensory level, such as the street-displayed goods, the crowds, carts, touching balconies, Jerusalem’s Gates or al-Zaytouna Mosque; the taste of fresh *Bambaloni*, warm *Kubbah* or refreshing Cane Juice; the sound of food chopping, traditional music or the calling *Ka’k* vendors. At other times, the Sūq acquires a heightened poetic dimension, evoking deeper memorable events, such as IA’s memory of the beautiful brides strolling the Sūq in their white silk *Safsari* gowns or MA’s walk with his father, where he told him about his own childhood memories, becoming “one of the unique moments [he] bonded with

⁶⁸¹ IA, interview, Appendix 11A.7, section 10.

⁶⁸² Walter Benjamin, “Excavation and Memory,” in *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings (1931-1934)*, edited by Michael W. Jennings, Howard Eiland and Gary Smith, (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999), 2:576.

[his] father.”⁶⁸³ Yet, through the space’s gathering potential and its barrier-free character—on both physical and social levels—the Sūq allows the transformation of many such individual memories into some socially-shared narratives, establishing the past’s intimate stories and festive events as the basis of being-in-space and being-with-others.

This possibly explains why many interviewees showed favourable inclinations towards the Sūq as opposed to the mall. Here, many interviewees claimed that while the modern streets or malls of Arabia possess a more functional purpose, their emphasis on the ‘wow’ effect remains tightly hinged on perception and consumption, resulting in an evident absence of a mythic narrative. In the case of the traditional Sūq, this mythic dimension is manifest not through a religious understanding of the space, as suggested in Jahin’s show or some of the previously discussed poetry, but through its symbolic presence as a historical and/or emotional passageway. This brings forth a critical observation relating to the mythic dimension suggested by the above narratives, most of which present an emotional story of the space and ignore many of its apparent shortcomings. These shortcomings were discussed by AA, whose dislike of traditional Arabian Sūqs is based on his personal experience of the Sūq as a loud, crowded and dirty place.⁶⁸⁴ Yet, for AA the notion of dirt is not hinged on the religiously mediated concepts of *taher/najess* (section 4.4), but from the deteriorating status of the place, whose “buildings are not well maintained [and the fact that] mostly poor people live there. So, the buildings are not looking nice.”⁶⁸⁵ The absence of religious references is traceable in almost all of the interviews, which also confirm that Sūqs are old and do not reflect the same standards of modern malls. In this regard, MF notes,

You have to keep in mind, when you go to these places you will smell funny things, I mean you will smell the sewer, you will smell dogs, cats, you see the dirt ... but you overlook it all. Cuz, ok I am not going there to scrutinize everything, no, I am going for the

⁶⁸³ MA, interview, Appendix 11A.6, section 13.

⁶⁸⁴ AA, interview, Appendix 11A.9, sections 5 and 6.

⁶⁸⁵ AA, interview, Appendix 11A.9, section 14:3.

*good time and I will look at the bigger nicer picture and I can let go of all the other things, to an extent of course.*⁶⁸⁶

Even though MF's above statement did not clearly define the boundaries of such 'extent' aside from her concerns regarding the absence of public toilets, AA believes that traditional Sūqs do not respond effectively to a modern man's needs, such as dedicated parking facilities, accessibility and intelligible zoning strategies, which are found in modern shopping malls.⁶⁸⁷ AA's critiques coincide with most participants, who agreed that the mall is more convenient, more accessible, better equipped and easier to shop at. Still, most participants believe that the mall lacks the social and cultural richness of the traditional Sūq's experience because "in the mall, you see only a certain class of society, whereas in the Sūq, you see the majority of a city's social make up."⁶⁸⁸

Linking these observations to the specific case of Dubai, SN further explains that while there are many Sūq-inspired mall designs in Dubai, for instance, most of them fail to recreate the traditional Sūq's experience due to the confinement of shops within singular cells, hence stripping the space from its social meaningfulness.⁶⁸⁹ Still, he believes that some examples, including *Madinat Jumeirah* and *La Mer*, are working well as re-interpretations of the Sūq street, allowing some interaction between the shop cells and the external passages through the use of large windows.⁶⁹⁰ He further comments that while these air-conditioned 'Sūqs' do resolve the heat problem, which was a chief reason for the abandonment of the older traditional types in Dubai, the real conundrum is that "their architectural style is fake and that people think that this is the old Dubai."⁶⁹¹ This sheds light on the deeper symbolic content of Dubai's architectural representation, which oscillates between a 'fake-of-the-authentic' image and a highly romanticizing socio-urban discourse that is unable to draw clear-cut boundaries **between a traditional Sūq's current physical state and its *wahm*-**

⁶⁸⁶ MF, interview, Appendix 11A.4, section 19:1.

⁶⁸⁷ AA, interview, Appendix 11A.9, section 13:2 and 13:3.

⁶⁸⁸ HI, interview, Appendix 11A.11, section 10:2

⁶⁸⁹ SN, interview, Appendix 11A.8, section 2:1.

⁶⁹⁰ SN, interview, Appendix 11A.8, section 4.

⁶⁹¹ SN, interview, Appendix 11A.8, section 2:1.



Figure 105 – *Al-Seef* Promenade development project at Creek Dubai, shown here as an example of fake old architecture. Photo by author.

laden image as a symbol of a glorious past or generator of economic leverage.⁶⁹² For, Dubai's re-incarnation of traditional Sūqs, as in the case of *La Mer* or *al-Seef*, focuses on the place's economic function and ignores its social value as a space of everyday rituals, embodied memories and urban connections. The architectural setting of these two sites, which is little beyond a detached open-air mall, suggests this too, reducing the historical and social relevance of Sūq-ness to matters of everyday fixed-price shopping. This brings forth some insights regarding some possible congruences between Post-Islamic malls—particularly the mega malls of Dubai—and traditional Sūqs in terms of experience and socially-manufactured meanings. On the one hand, both seem to conjure the idea of expansiveness, where one is expected to wander freely from one end to the other guided by one's practical knowledge of the space. In the case of the Sūq, this practical knowledge is achieved through familiarity, the positioning of buildings and succession of shop types, as understood from Malaika's poetry, Mahfouz's novels and Jahin's show. In the case of the mall, this practical

⁶⁹² SN, interview, Appendix 11A.8, section 2:1.

knowledge is rather prescribed through signs and zoning/circulation strategies. On the other hand, both also seem to make room for different types of social interactions within some predefined norms/regulations. In the case of the Sūq, the boundaries of interaction seem to be socially negotiated, as inferred from the interviewees' descriptions of the dress-code (MA and LD), haggling tactics (MF and NA), festive celebrations (MS and IA) and food preparation protocols (HI and LD). While these boundaries are also present in the malls of Dubai, it seems that their application is largely instated through some governmental laws as opposed to being socially negotiated (Fig. 105a). This possibly explains why the Sūq appears in most of the interviewees' descriptions as an object of nostalgia, a symbol of authenticity or a path for freedom. Accordingly, such interpretations not only shed light on the effects of the many prejudices accumulated through the previously discussed Orientalist, Islamicist and revisionist studies (sections 1.4.1 and 4.3), but also explain why IA still believes that,

Of course, Dubai is great, you know, the revolution of modernity is a big wow, the towers, but it has nothing to do with what I am talking about. Maybe they are richer, for sure, but history for me doesn't have a price... You know anything which has a price is cheap. These shops and these small houses [in the Sūq] do not have a price... It's your heritage, it's your history and your history doesn't have a price... [but the] Mall, modernity, everything has a price, people don't know each other, it's very cold, it's very isolated, it's very individual...⁶⁹³

Considering the above, it is suggested that the traditional Sūqs of Arabia behold a strong mythic dimension. Yet, today such dimension is not concerned with the religious interpretation of the space but rather with some dialectic tensions in the Arabian understanding of tradition and modernity. On the one hand, the exaggerated expressions of nostalgia characterising most of the previously discussed poetry, interview responses and Jahin's show, place the modern Arabian street in a dialectic relationship with traditional Sūqs. This dialectic relationship suggests the socio-cultural detachment of Arabia's modern **streets/malls** from 'real' lived events and **their** inability to express the binding

⁶⁹³ IA, interview, Appendix 11A.7, section 10.



Figure 105a – List of Governmental regulations or Courtesy Policy applicable in all of Dubai's malls. This poster is usually placed at the entrance of malls

ethos or concerns of the Arabian community, including its political, economic and aesthetic challenges. As opposed to the orderly design and construction of modern streets/malls, “the beauty of the Sūq is that it naturally grows, [it] did not just happen as one go,” and for this reason the Sūq constantly needs “the input of the people,” extracting its own relevance from their historical position, customs and daily rituals.⁶⁹⁴ On the other hand, the current architectural practices of Arabia’s emerging urban centres, like Dubai, subdues the traditional, in other words the old, poor and dirty to use AA’s expressions, on the basis of its incommensurability with the expectations of modern man, including his/her need for safety, cleanliness and accessibility.⁶⁹⁵ In these terms, the Sūq is framed as an obsolete urban object that falls short in integrating some imperative modern amenities, like technology, accessibility and hygiene. Fixing such issues is beyond the scope of this study, requiring further research that would test the usefulness of reviving the Sūq model.⁶⁹⁶ Accordingly, what remains here is to categorize the different sub-themes identified through the interviews in relation to their spatial, social, cultural and mythic implications, as shown in the following tables, to cross-examine them with the other evidence collected in this chapter.

⁶⁹⁴ SN, interview, Appendix 11A.8, section 6:4.

⁶⁹⁵ AA, interview, Appendix 11A.4, sections 5 and 6.

⁶⁹⁶ SN, interview, Appendix 11A.8, section 6:4.

Spatial Dimension - Sensory Experience
"I am looking for the good experience, but you might as well expect some downfalls in some aspects." MF (Appendix 11-A4)
"You smell a lot of fresh bread, and you smell a lot of the spices. Lot of the areas, which have those nice spices, these places I love." NA (Appendix 11-A5)
"these places you will smell funny things, I mean you will smell the sewer, you will smell dogs, cats, you see the dirt ... but you overlook it all. Cuz, ok I am not going there to scrutinize everything, no, I am going for the good time." MF (Appendix 11-A4)
"you just go into a Sūq and the way it looks, how the carts are being organized, the way people are moving around, the way spices are being displayed, the actual [emmm] the ceiling is amazing, honestly." NA (Appendix 11-A5)
"there are these very old narrow alleys, ok, where the balconies touch each other, it is so old and ancient... The houses and the alleys, they are so narrow. So, you see the building, you see the people, you see the outlets, you see people selling all sorts of stuff: books to shoes, the food, it's just so much to take as in an experience." MA (Appendix 11-A6)
"you actually see the ingredients of how things are being prepared and being cooked right in front of you... You know the smell of meat being put on a grill, the actual cooking smell when you drop the onions to the pan and you smell it... that's part of why I visit the Sūq, to see the shops but also to enjoy a meal. And food being such an important thing ... I love it!" MA (Appendix 11-A6)
"All this kind of stuff you will find it there. And of course, the traditional food... It's cheap and it's traditional and it's popular and it's so tasty and it doesn't cost you anything. It's actually not a restaurant, you just grab and go, you know, it's on the go." IA (Appendix 11-A7)
"When I say the street of leather, you will not find anything for example which is not leather like plastic or fake leather, no, it is only leather. Even the smell of leather, you know, you start to smell it even when you are far away, you know you are going through the leather market." IA (Appendix 11-A7)
"Sūqs are very very loud... Very happy. You see the vibes, you feel the vibes, you feel the energy, you feel the atmosphere. It's a very happy atmosphere." IA (Appendix 11-A7)
"The buildings are not clean. The buildings are not well maintained. Mostly there are poor people who live there so the buildings are not looking nice. Maybe if they just maintain it or just repaint them it would look better but for me, I don't like these kinds of things." AA (Appendix 11-A9)
"Sometimes I take a picture of the whole Sūq when I stand at the beginning of it to see the whole thing. There is traffic there, lots of things, busy, things hanging here and there. Clothes along with food and different things. So, you feel it's an art piece." LD (Appendix 11-A10)
"It's not, it's not my favourite place... Cuz it's very crowded, it's very hard to reach. Uh [Pause] it is not clean... Dusty, dirty streets, dirty uh [pause] dirty floors." AA (Appendix 11-A9)
"Sūqs are all the same... They look alike, they are all very narrow... emmm... alleys and very crowded, very loud voices everywhere. Small shops." AA (Appendix 11-A9)
"When you go to a Sūq, you are expecting to be sweaty, to walk in the open-air you cannot try clothes like you do in the mall... So, part of the experience is just to be walking outdoor and also about the display of the food. You are in an open market, so some of the food is displayed there on the shelves and some packed. Some of them is being just prepared. So, if I want to taste for example, I wouldn't take a cup of tea even. You would see them, that they take it from someone, wash it up with little water in front of you, fill it again and give it to another person. So, I would never try something like that!" LD (Appendix 11-A10)
"whatever you see from outside it is different, though you still see some dirty things on the floor, some old fruits there, vegetables. It is a different experience at the entrance. At the entrance you cannot expect to see something nice inside." LD (Appendix 11-A10)
"I like these particular cultural things that are not found anywhere else. Also, in Marrakesh you have these vendors or people who are sitting in the streets making shows, like rooster fights or snake dances. These things are very different, it is such a beautiful Sūq. They also have their signature coffee shops, where you sit to drink green tea with mint while watching the sunset." HI (Appendix 11-A11)
"Aside from Knafe, the smell of pastry usually in the morning fills the air." MK (Appendix 11-A12)

Spatial Dimension - Urban Experience
"I like to go to alleys and experience these hidden gems." NA (Appendix 11-A5)
"Where I have the tea there is a very old coffee shop, it's very famous actually, it's called 'Shahbandar.' That's a coffee shop since the 40's, you go there and see old pictures of all the famous people who used to be there... So, you sit there, and you enjoy your cup of tea and you would hear them talking about their analysis of how did this generation come out different from them, reminiscing about old times, listening to music in the background, the old traditional music [cough] Even the side table designs are very old wooden structures with paint, the seating is made out of benches with a mattress on it, you know the old traditional one, you know, with a gramophone actually playing ... Honestly, people care about the ambiance." MA (Appendix 11-A6)
"every single capital in Tunis [probably meaning every city] has its own Old Medina, we have maybe six or seven, all of them they have walls... So, you won't get lost reaching there because once you see these walls you know, even if you are 30 km away, that this is the Old Medina, which means the Sūq." LA (Appendix 11-A7)
"you need to walk a lot and you will have to visit the mosque, you know. [You have to dress up modestly] because it's still a mosque people pray inside. Tourists go inside to see the architecture, the monuments, it's inspired from which empire, who built it. All this kind of stuff you will find it there." LA (Appendix 11-A7)
"the Sūq is the street itself, the street itself is the market not the shop. So, the street itself you should have people putting their product in the street... The street is a pedestrian movement, even if it not a pedestrian street, like in Cairo, people are selling in the street." SN (Appendix 11-A8)
"Most Sūqs are on ground level... But the lower part always opens up, and the shops extend in the street or in the public realm... allowing the activation of the passageway" SN (Appendix 11-A8)
"the presence of the Sūq has a very strong relationship to the mosque because Muslims have to go to the mosque five times a day, so on your way you might want to pick up some bread, some cheese, whatever you wanna pick up, for the family back at home." SN (Appendix 11-A8)
"the problem [with new Sūq-like structures in Dubai] is that you find a lot of people thinking that it is the Old Dubai, thinking that this is authentic architecture... You know it is fake of the authentic... that is another challenge that you are dealing with." SN (Appendix 11-A8)
"Mostly, the shops at the entrance are the most expensive. Some people they just go there buy something, like a souvenir, and leave. When you go deeper, you find a better catch, many things that are still available." LD (Appendix 11-A10)
"From my experience, different countries have different layout [for Sūqs]. The common thing is that they are all open, busy and things are just displayed here and there. Some Sūqs would just put clothes all the way then you find food in a separate place. Other Sūqs you find everything mixed up." LD (Appendix 11-A10)
"the Marrakesh Sūq itself, like all others, it is a long street with small passageways branching from it, with tiny shops displaying their products outside. Some of these passageways have roofs, in the old building style...most of the products are put outside, so people who are walking can see them. See, Sūq visitors may not enter the shops, so when they see the products outside, they would be interested to buy something. Then the vendor usually takes them inside the shop." HI (Appendix 11-A11)
"It is designed as a vaulted passageway with regular domed intersections. The passageway itself is oriented towards East/West to catch the Western sea breeze and to direct it towards the eastern parts of the city. The city itself is situated between two mountains, which helps to circulate the air." MK (Appendix 11-A12)
"the Sūq is the heart of the old city of Nablus. More accurately, it is the main artery of the city, connecting the different parts of the old city. This main artery has many branches that step upwards to small side districts, named after the families living there." MK (Appendix 11-A12)
"the Nablus Sūq is a place where people take refuge. It is designed as follows: a wide cobble stone street, wide enough to allow two horse drawn carriages to pass in each direction (East/West). The shops are elevated above street level by two or three steps, not very high maybe 4-4.5 inches. The steps are wide and lead to a pedestrian platform in front of the shops." MK (Appendix 11-A12)

Figure 106 - Tables showing the Interviews' General Category (Spatial Dimension) and outlining the extractions from transcripts with regards to Urban Experience, Sensory Experience and Diversity.

Spatial Dimension - Diversity
"But in a Sūq no, you have different corners of different pieces of art, different feelings of people, Different People [assertive voice], you know. You kinda see how other people see it too." MF (Appendix 11-A4)
"Let's say here in the UAE, if you go to those Sūqs you find a different kind of culture, not just what they are displaying, also the architecture, the way people also ... the way how you actually deal with people, when you talk to people. It's a little bit different, not too different, but everyone has a different feel, like in Jerusalem for instance the artefacts on display are also different." NA (Appendix 11-A5)
"as I told you Tunis has been through different empires, we have the Roman empire, Almohad empire, we have the Byzantine empire, we have the Fatimid empire. So, all of this you will find it in the Sūq because every one of them left its prints." IA (Appendix 11-A7)
"Maybe the overall look of the Sūq is the same, but definitely the type of products or how they are selling or how they are approaching people could be different from one place to another." AA (Appendix 11-A9)
"You have different types of Sūqs in different countries. So, they give you a nice idea about the country you are visiting. You can feel that there is a difference between one Sūq and another. You can see different people, you can see different food. It's different experience from one place to another." LD (Appendix 11-A10)

Social Dimension - Connection / Communication
"A lot of tourists will go to the central Sūq because they want to get closer to the culture of that country or that city and they want to feel this connection." MF (Appendix 11-A4)
"for the feel and experience of the Sūq definitely with people." MF (Appendix 11-A4)
"In a Sūq, you can even take an opinion of a stranger next to you." MF (Appendix 11-A4)
"So, when you are sitting in the restaurant someone would throw a funny comment and everyone would giggle, you know. These places don't have the barriers that are imposed by modern societal structures, no. You go there, you are so down to earth, everybody is the same, everybody is coming with a good spirit. So, you sit there and connect with people... like sitting in a living room where everyone is talking, everyone is just so natural." MA (Appendix 11-A6)
"You talk to strangers [affirmative tone]. I don't know why the atmosphere there is different, very sociable." IA (Appendix 11-A7)
"[In the Coffee Shop] You talk to anyone because there are no tables, it's like a big table where everybody can join. Today, it's like three or four big tables, this big [hand gesture to simulate the size] huge, and you are seated with everyone, so 100% you will start communicating, talking and socializing." IA (Appendix 11-A7)
"usually in most of the Sūqs that I have been, they are very nice people, they are friendly and welcoming. Much better than when you visit a mall." LD (Appendix 11-A10).
"I prefer to go with someone, because sometimes I feel intimidated in the Sūqs it's too busy. Also, when you see something you like to share, when you are amazed about something you like to share because you are not going there just to buy. You are going to look around and to see nice stuff. So, I like to share, like 'look at this piece,' or 'this is nice do you think I can buy it.' So, it is nice to talk about it, it's an experience by itself." LD (Appendix 11-A10)
"Sometimes if we are in a group or just with my friend or husband, we like to talk and have fun about things. If you are tasting something that is new for you, you taste it then you make the faces, or you like it, or you buy more. Even if I am trying stuff, it is much easier when you have someone, and you are sharing." LD (Appendix 11-A10)
"if I sit in a coffee shop I will listen to other people's conversations because these places in the old Sūqs are usually very small and the tables are crammed next to each other." HI (Appendix 11-A11)
"In these gatherings, women usually bring with them home-made pastries or sweets to share with other women. These places also serve as celebration spaces or rendezvous venues, where women can gather in large numbers outside their homes for different social purposes. Many engagement arrangements happen there too, when one woman sees another's daughter and proposes to have her marry her son for instance. See, these Kamouniah were very important for the women, allowing them a venue for entertainment, connection and relaxation after shopping. See the social life was very beautiful and warm; it was simple indeed but still very beautiful." MK (Appendix 11-A12)

Social Dimension – Vendors
"vendors have amazing skills...The speed at which they serve you is unbelievable and the confidence... well actually seeing them doing it is more unbelievable... they don't even look doing it they are like tuk tuk tuk you know, and your plate is done." MF (Appendix 11-A4)
"In a Sūq, they will display some of the things but if you want the real treasures, they have it hidden in there... so you have to have this connection with the vendor himself then they will give you the good stuff, you know." MF (Appendix 11-A4)
"here is your food, eat it, served from a man who probably, himself, has been working in that restaurant for 30-40 years, so he gives it his heart and soul and you feel it; it's wow... it's real home-y food." MA (Appendix 11-A6)
"so authentic, you know, because usually when you go to these Sūqs you find the cook, he is the person who has been working there and he is probably the owner of the shop, he has been there forever, the recipe has been done a hundred times, he cooks it with his soul and heart... it's so hearty food, it's done, you know, with a touch of love and passion" MA (Appendix 11-A6)
"every shop has its story. You will find that old man, still he is alive, and he will tell you "you know me 30 years and my grandpa 100 years ago," every shop has a story. You are talking about shops that exist from the mid-ages. So, yes, it's a heritage." IA (Appendix 11-A6)
"every vendor of them is having a story to tell you and he is happy to tell you about it." IA (Appendix 11-A7)
"When you ask about a price, you know that they are putting a higher price because they know that people will bargain. So, you just have to throw half the price there. And you tell them no I will take it for half the price, and they go like we cannot sell you at this price. So, you go up and they go down until you reach a good deal. It's fun, it's part of the experience as well." LD (Appendix 11-A10)
"vendors are always roaming the streets and calling people. They would even pull you inside the shop [laughing]. They keep on talking, bargaining and explaining, to the extent that you might feel obliged to enter their shop. Some people might get irritated but others, like me, would just enter the shop to see what they have." HI (Appendix 11-A11)
"I would say the Sūq vendors are usually very nice, warm and willing to negotiate." HI (Appendix 11-A11)
"I get worried drinking from mobile vendors [laughing]. See he pours the juice from a glass or copper vessel that he carries on his back. The cups he uses are carried in his pocket. So, I get scared that they might not be clean." HI (Appendix 11-A11)
"In front of every shop the vendors stand on chairs, calling people to come their products." HI (Appendix 11-A11)
"Arab vendors understand the Arabian social-cultural norms and we all know the proper way to act with each other." HI (Appendix 11-A11)
"Every profession is passed from grandfather to father to son, it's heritage." MK (Appendix 11-A12)
"each part of the Sūq has its own leader, or <i>fatouwa</i> , whose job is to follow up on the commercial transactions of his particular profession. So, if any customer comes to him complaining about any trader, his responsibility is to reconcile between people and to punish cheaters." MK (Appendix 11-A12)
"during the month of Ramadan, the carpet traders join together to decorate the Sūq and their leader becomes the one responsible for the process. This leader also puts the rules of when to open or close the shops and he regulates the movement in vehicular streets. Usually, they stop cars from entering the streets one hour before Iftar (breaking of fast) and one hour after in order to cover the street with carpets and install food tables in the street so people can have Iftar." MK (Appendix 11-A12)

Figure 107 – Tables showing the Interviews' General Category (Social Dimension) and outlining the extractions from transcripts with regards to Vendors, Rituals and Communication.

Social Dimension - Daily Rituals
"you have to go through the whole thing and they are usually long roads of shops and you have to check out everything... haggle for prices... that's the fun of the Sūq, you have to haggle even though I don't know how to, I try [giggles] but I still don't know. But it's fun, it is always fun even if it is 100 degrees outside, it is still fun." MF (Appendix 11-A4)
"I enjoy long walks with plenty of things to look at, and there is no better place than a Sūq because every corner is engaging, it has something [pause] and you have to look once and twice to actually see it right... plenty of colours could actually be a bit dazzling at the beginning, so you really have to look into it." MF (Appendix 11-A4)
"I like to be comfortable to go around, to go up the stairs, sitting. I like to experience Sūqs to the fullest, to sit actually on the sidewalk, have some snack." NA (Appendix 11-A5)
"if you bargain well you could get good prices, yes." NA (Appendix 11-A5)
"For me, every experience in a traditional Sūq is a very pleasant one... For sure, it's a getaway from daily life, from routine. You just go there and experience something, you know, in the open air." NA (Appendix 11-A5)
"In Tunisia, malls, they exist of course but not for the marriage rituals...not for any kind of ceremony, not for engagement, not for marriage, not for [emmm] nothing. Even the tohor, circumcision for the kids, everything has to be bought from the Sūq." LA (Appendix 11-A7)
"It's not like you are in a mall and you just go to shop and you take a piece, pay and leave. Bargaining is a fun part of it." LD (Appendix 11-A10)
"Every morning, pastry mobile vendors also roam the Sūq carrying baskets filled with cheese or zaatar pastry. These are for a breakfast on the go. In the same time, coffee makers are also roaming with their cups and copper pots. They keep on clicking the cups to attract people 'tick, tick, tick.'" MK (Appendix 11-A12)

Cultural Dimension - Norms / Tradition
"people will always comment on something or they will give you a smirk without actually giving you the comment." MF (Appendix 11-A4)
"if I am visiting a traditional Sūq then I usually don't like to dress up I really dress down cuz I wanna go with the flow, I really wanna be in touch with the surroundings and how things look. You know, you can overpower these things if you were wearing a suit and you go there, you are out of context, you don't feel the thing." MA (Appendix 11-A6)
"In the Sūq in Bab el-Dirah. It's a very very big hammam that every woman in Tunisia has to go there to wash out, to make, you know, all the woman stuff before the marriage, with a group of women, of course they have to be relatives." IA (Appendix 11-A7)
"Maybe before yes there were some preparation, because it's old and you have these old men who keep their shops there, so you have to wear this kind of 'abaya and stuff. It's a kind of respect for these old men. But now no not anymore, because we are more into a modern society, so you can wear anything, no need to cover yourself." IA (Appendix 11-A7)
Women have to dress up modestly in Sūqs "Because people may [uh] annoy her." AA (Appendix 11-A9)
"We have to respect the people that are there, because most people in the Sūqs they have different traditions. So, when you are wearing decently you accommodate everyone's thinking and their lifestyle." LD (Appendix 11-A10)
"I dress up very casually. I wear tennis shoes or slippers, something very comfortable because I will be walking in the street. The floor/ground of the Sūq is usually uneven, sometimes there are stones or holes, so heels would get stuck there. Tennis shoes are the best." HI (Appendix 11-A11)
"when a man wants to buy his daughter's trousseau he goes to a merchant and asks his help in buying all the items. The merchant hires carts and walks in the street to the different shops buying all needed items. Following the carts are usually people playing music and drums, announcing to the Sūq goers that this is a bridal trousseau." MK (Appendix 11-A12)
"Samein Palestinian Jews celebrate Easter in the Sūq. They make a special pastry that is baked in a specific store in the Sūq. See at the outskirts of the Sūq there were many bakeries, each specializing in a particular item. So, the Jews dealt with only one of these bakeries, for religious reasons. After they bake it, the first thing they do in Easter is to distribute the pastries on all the vendors in the Sūq." MK (Appendix 11-A12)
"Women before used to go to the Sūq uncovered, maybe a small scarf on the head only. They used to put on makeup and dress fashionably, for the time of course. Not one person can bother a woman in the Sūq or even tell her 'good morning' without her permission." MK (Appendix 11-A12)

Cultural Dimension - Old/Identity/Authenticity
"See usually traditional Sūqs are way inside the city because it is usually the old structure of the city itself and usually a lot of traffic because it is old, and it is still raw." MF (Appendix 11-A4)
"I usually go there just to explore the authenticity of the actual space... I want to experience the actual culture, look at the architecture, see what kinds of food... So basically, it's a full experience." NA (Appendix 11-A5)
"They are not polished, everything is the old architecture. The stones are from long time back [emmm] people are very hospitable, very kind, they don't have the prices too high. You could say it is more of the original feel." NA (Appendix 11-A5)
"Sometimes you see a lot of old architecture and sometimes you find these really old places like cafés... sometimes you even find these shops that have not been discovered so much and they have really nice authentic things." NA (Appendix 11-A5)
"Authenticity in everything, basically. In everything, food, architecture, ambiance, the way even people deal with you, it's all there. Even, like I said, a simple drink or coffee or whatever or even having something like nuts is definitely a different flavour over there." NA (Appendix 11-A5)
"There is something about these old gates that is very very fascinating." NA (Appendix 11-A5)
"But the actual feel in all of the Sūqs has the same authenticity, the simple life, the simple way of thinking, the simple way you deal with people." NA (Appendix 11-A5)
"to be into history and appreciating the old tradition of how buildings look, of how things used to be in the past, natural with that element and sense of time and culture and tradition." MA (Appendix 11-A6)
"the restaurants also take you back in time and you enjoy that simple old traditional way, from the plates, from the cups, from the saucers ... it's not ... it hasn't been contaminated by the modern era." MA (Appendix 11-A6)
"living in the past is really enjoyable, because people were more authentic, things were more real, we didn't have all these foods that are done with chemicals." MA (Appendix 11-A6)
"all these traditions that used to be there in our old Sūqs and that we see in the movies, you actually live them... wow so authentic!" MA (Appendix 11-A6)
"I think people realize, especially the younger generations, that we miss that old, let me say vintage stuff, and vintage is back in fashion." MA (Appendix 11-A6)
"You will find that old man, still he is alive, and he will tell you "you know me 30 years and my grandpa 100 years ago," every shop has a story. You are talking about shops that exist from the mid-ages. So, yes, it's a heritage." IA (Appendix 11-A7)
"You feel like we are in the old days; everybody loves each other; somehow people, which is very true, as if we are now again together. You have this feeling. This is our identification." IA (Appendix 11-A7)
"The Sūqs are very happy. You know anything which has a price is cheap. These shops and these small houses do not have a price, because you won't give a price to something classic, because classic comes from classy from beautiful, from very expensive, the real value of things. It's your heritage, it's your history and your history doesn't have a price." IA (Appendix 11-A7)
"We have this little tiny coffee shop with traditional carpets, we sit on the floor cuz obviously there is no chair. There is pouf, we call it the pouf, it's a French name. You sit almost 15cm on top of the floor, and the table is made by nhass [copper] and every single thing in that coffee shop has its own history; the chairs, the carpet, the curtains, everything is old. And when I tell you old, believe me, it very very very old and it's so beautiful. The colours - the red, the purple, the yellow - everything is there so it's that much different, but you see it beautiful." IA (Appendix 11-A7)
"Arabic Sūq means a market, so you buy traditional stuff, you buy the old stuff that you won't find anywhere else except in the Sūq." IA (Appendix 11-A7)
"the old Sūq in any country reflects the nature of the people who live there." HI (Appendix 11-A11)
"I love going there because it shows me the true nature of the city and its people. The people of the Sūq are the real people. In the mall, you see only a certain class of society. But in the Sūq, you see the majority of a city's social make up, at least 50% of it." HI (Appendix 11-A11)
"These Sūqs are so old to the extent that the stones there smell old and are full of history and heritage/civilization. The stones are old, and their edges are black... so beautiful. I love these old Sūqs." HI (Appendix 11-A11)

Cultural Dimension - Nostalgia / Identity / Memory	
"It makes me feel like going back to a nice era, nice time, when things were simpler, people were nicer, shop owners friendlier, things were outside, displayed in the old way, you know. It gives me that feeling that things are natural, are real." MA (Appendix 11-A5)	
"It's a place [the coffee shop] where the old generation still go, and you would sit there and have your tea... I am sorry my hair stood... I got goosebumps [giggles]... Cuz you know you sit there and you hear those old people talking and they talk about such interesting things, you know, and because these Sūqs usually attract the old generation, that's a familiar place to them." MA (Appendix 11-A5)	
"I love going there because I enjoy being there. I enjoy walking with history, that's what I love doing." MA (Appendix 11-A6)	
"because I am Tunisian, of course when I go there for vacation, I should go to the Sūqs or to the 'Old Medina' as we call it because that's us that's our culture and that's where we belong." IA (Appendix 11-A7)	
"That's actually the time when the old town was given the name of a Sūq... It first had a religious and cultural meaning then it had an economical influence. And from that time until today it actually didn't change... So, till now we kept it as it is because it's our identity and we are proud of it and it shouldn't be touched by modernity and by the new business men and capitalism and all of this modernity stuff." IA (Appendix 11-A7)	
"you enjoy more when you are with friends or if you have foreigner friends that are coming in for a visit you have to take them there cuz it's your pride. It's your pride, they have to see our history." IA (Appendix 11-A7)	
"It is a pride even for the, sorry for the term, even for ignorant people they know this cuz you live the history. She lived the history [grandma], she has been there. When she wanna buy something, she goes there. When her daughter, who is my mom, wanted to get married, she took her there; the hammam, the Sūq, the material she buys, the Jihaz, I mean the [emmm] douane, everything is bought from there. Actually, we don't buy anything from outside." IA (Appendix 11-A7)	
"the Sūq is a story. Everyday is a new day, every vendor is your father, your grandfather. Everybody is your brother. Very woman you see in the street going to buy stuff for her daughter for her wedding is somehow your mother or your grandmother." IA (Appendix 11-A7)	
"There is an incident, we've been to the old Sūq in Nablus... actually I was with a group of friends, and we got a little tired of walking, so we ended up in an alley, sitting on the floor, and we had tormos [lupin]. Beautiful weather, feeling free, I guess because we were just having fun and there was no [emmm] nothing to impose on you like, you know, those daily routines... We saw one of those carts that sells those things and we took them and sat in the middle of the road and started laughing like idiots." NA (Appendix 11-A5)	
"the tea comes in those short glasses the way our grandfathers used to drink it not in the new cups and stuff" MA (Appendix 11-A6)	
"So, we have our famous 'Kubbeh' it's made out of meat and comes in a bowl... it's like a very soupy thing and I always remember it there in winter, it keeps you warm... My grandma used to do it, so it is really done in that very traditional way. We also have the chickpeas, they bring it to you in a small plate with a twist of lemon on it and you eat it, so warms you up. It really takes me back to the time, when I used to visit my grandmother and grandfather, and I start remembering these moments." MA (Appendix 11-A6)	
"One of the most enduring memories was going there with my father, I think, and him taking me through that old traditional Sūq and talking about how his childhood was and explaining to me what used to happen and what are the areas there. He allowed me to envision how things were looking in that specific time; and I built from that a picture in my head, a memory of how things were, and he really made me... again goosebumps [giggles]... feel that moment of how great that era and time was versus now... And you are suddenly in touch with history. That's one of the unique moments I bonded with my father. One of the most unique moments." MA (Appendix 11-A6)	
"It's an experience, it's lovely, actually you see when I am saying this I miss it, I wanna go there during the winter." IA (Appendix 11-A7)	
"They are all happy. For me, they make me feel happy. They are full of life, with the loud vendors and loudly talking people, moving in and out of shops. They have different layouts, but they are all lively and happy places. People are always walking, talking and laughing, the vendors are calling and bargaining. Very happy and lively." HI (Appendix 11-A11)	
"I love old Sūqs very much." HI (Appendix 11-A11)	
"I loved the old city because it was full of life. Every step you take there you smell the essence of tradition and life. I would be sneezing once I come near the spice shops, I would be filled with the smell of olive oil near the pressing factories." MK (Appendix 11-A12)	

Figure 108 - Tables showing the Interviews' General Category (Cultural Dimension) and outlining the extractions from transcripts with regards to Old/Authenticity, Nostalgia/Memory, and Norms.

Mythic Dimension - Individual Expectations vs. Modern-Day Realities
"Look the people who go to the traditional market or Sūqs, what I observe is that they are really educated people who long for a good past. On the contrary, I see the nouveaux-riches or well-off people don't like going there. They like going to shopping malls, maybe because it reminds them of a memory that they want to avoid or a certain difficult life they used to live, so they don't wanna remember this, they wanna appreciate the finer things in life now. That's what I observe. " MA (Appendix 11-A5)
"Because nowadays we are [emmm] slaves of the modernity but when you go to these kinds of places, you will see something old, you will see tradition, you will actually live the tradition." IA (Appendix 11-A7)
"Of course, Dubai is great, you know, the revolution of modernity is a big wow, the towers, but it has nothing to do with what I am talking about. Maybe they are richer for sure, 100%, but [emmm] history for me doesn't have a price." IA (Appendix 11-A7)
"the old Sūqs were all natural, including the ones in Dubai, but somehow, they dried out. So, would it be interesting to go and revive those? We have to admit that the beauty of the Sūq is that it naturally grows, did not just happen as one go... it expands on it. So, now when you make it all as one project and you mimic the nature of the Sūq, sometimes it works but many others it doesn't. You need the input of the people. " SN (Appendix 11-A8)
"maybe the tourists like to try them, but as a local I don't." AA (Appendix 11-A9)
"In my opinion I don't like dirty places, even the elevations of the buildings are not clean. The buildings are not well maintained. Mostly there are poor people who live there so the buildings are not looking nice. Maybe if they just maintain it or just repaint them it would look better but for me, I don't like these kinds of things." AA (Appendix 11-A9)
"In modern day they serve the purpose for the people living around them in the same city. Because there are people who go buy their daily stuff from there. But for us, in our modern life and because we are living in a big city and we work, we cannot find everything that we want in a Sūq." LD (Appendix 11-A10)

Figure 109 - Table showing the Interviews' extracted evidence for the traditional Sūq's experience in relation to Mythic Dimension.

7.7 Analysis (03): Post-Islamic Sūq-ness and *al-wahm* of Progress

The above studies (sections 7.3, 7.4, 7.5 and 7.6) uncover an amalgam of corroborative evidences relating to the Sūq's present meaningfulness. To propose possible links between these evidences, the following will cross-examine the previously collected evidence and will attempt to uncover the different possible reasons that led to the displacement of the Sūq's meaning in Post-Islamic Arabia. Each set of collected evidence underwent a process of preliminary narrative analysis (sections 7.3, 7.4, 7.5 and 7.6), suggesting a multiplicity of sub-themes. Having analysed each set separately, the following will combine all of these identified sub-themes, juxtaposing 'what is seen' against 'what is said.' By doing so, this section will again reach out to Gadamer's argument that, "the ethical life of the people found expression in all forms of communal life, giving shape to the whole and so allowing men to recognize themselves in their own world."⁶⁹⁷

⁶⁹⁷ Gadamer, "The Relevance of the Beautiful," 14.

7.7.1 Thematic Analysis: Initial, Focused and Theoretical Coding

The juxtaposition of collected evidence suggested an amalgam of sub-themes underpinning the era's historical context and lived experiences. The chapter cross-examined these themes against the recurrent themes presented through Post-Islamic Arabia's poetry, literature, media productions and social dialogues (sections 7.4, 7.5 and 7.6). By doing so, the analysis adopts Gadamer's theoretical arguments regarding the role of language in bridging the gap between the perceived world, as a form of lived experience, and the interpretation of these perceptions and experiences in relation to some particular social and historical contexts (section 2.4).⁶⁹⁸ By using poetry, Jahin's show and the interviews as primary sources for this historical stage, the research is again following Gadamer's belief that,

*rhetoric and poetics have belonged together since antiquity, and in a sense, rhetoric took precedence over poetics. Rhetoric is the universal form of human communication, which even today determines our social life in an incomparably more profound fashion than does science.*⁶⁹⁹

As described in section 3.5.3, the thematic analysis process involves four stages. First is initial coding, where collected evidence is divided into three tables that summarize the evidences and themes extracted from the investigation of the main variables of Historical Context, Language and Lived Experience. Through these tables, the research proposes the era's overall Descriptive Codes. Second is focused coding, where each set of variables and its codes are examined against the other two sets for purposes of establishing links between them. The Focused Coding Diagram (FCD) is used in this stage to graphically illustrate these links, using blue lines to highlight the *fadaā* related theme and red lines to denote the *tareeq* related themes. Depending on the number of connections created between different themes, the FCD suggests the larger categorical themes and their associated sub-themes. This suggestion is then transferred to the initial coding

⁶⁹⁸ Hans Georg Gadamer, "Towards a Phenomenology of Ritual and Language," in *Language and Linguisticality in Gadamer's Hermeneutics*, edited by Hans Georg Gadamer, translated by Lawrence K. Schmidt (Maryland: Lexington Books, 2000), 22-24.

⁶⁹⁹ Gadamer, "The Relevance of the Beautiful," 16.

tables, creating color-coded groups, where again blue denoted *fadaā* and red symbolizes the *tareeq*. The groups and relationships suggested in this stage reflect the discussions undertaken in this chapter, resulting in the era's Categorical Codes. Third is theoretical coding, where the colour-coded groups are re-organized into a final table that compiles each group of sub-themes under its suggested larger code. This stage establishes the era's Theoretical Codes. Fourth is the Idea Networking (IN) stage (section 7.7.2), where larger themes and sub-themes are again mapped as connected clusters of meaning (section 3.6.3). The workings of the stage will be fully explained in the next section.

So, the initial coding stage revealed that the Post-Islamic historical context (Fig. 110) comprises of several sub-themes, including presence/power, historicization, freedom, struggles, stage/display and simulation of modernity through Western models of development. These themes were identified through the case studies (section 7.3), poetry (section 7.5) and the interviews (section 7.6). The recurrent themes in this stage suggest political and religious infiltrations, which were apparent in the case studies as much as in the linguistic metaphors employed in Post-Islamic Arabia's literary products. Many such metaphors also pointed to the deeper social struggles faced by Post-Islamic poets/writers, whose nostalgic descriptions of traditional Arabian *Sūqs* reflect larger concerns regarding the historical validity of the Arabian *fadaā* and the structures underpinning its understanding in the region's collective consciousness. These poetic sub-themes are outlined and identified in the Language table (Fig. 111). The analysis also shows that the sub-theme of superiority/pride is an important mythic dimension that encircles the lived experience of traditional Arabian *Sūqs*, whose value today is not only assessed according to some physical sensory experiences—architecture, food, crowds, alleys, sounds, vendors and displays—but is also bound to some socially-manufactured meanings relating to identity, cultural diversity, togetherness and magic/treasures, as revealed through poetry (section 7.5), Jahin's show (section 7.6.1) and the interviews (section 7.6.2.2). These sub-themes are outlined in the Lived Experience table (Fig. 112).

This initial coding was followed by the focused coding stage, as illustrated in (Fig. 113). The focused coding diagram (FCD) re-grouped the sub-themes presented through the three initial coding tables, suggesting possible links between the descriptive codes (section 3.6.3). These links reflect the variable contextual meanings of the sub-themes in relation to the totality of collected evidence. These links, which are primarily based on the relationship between the Historical Context/ Lived Experience and the socially reciprocated meanings presented through the Language circle, are translated in the form of color-codes on the initial coding tables (section 3.6.3). These colour-coded categories are then transferred to the final table, or the Theoretical Coding table (Fig. 114), which re-organizes all identified sub-themes under six larger themes: In-Between, Historical Validation, Nostalgia, Superiority, Western Procession, Spatial Memory. The identification of these large themes, as noted above, depended on the number of relationship that they establish in relation to other themes on the FCD. The themes hierarchy of relationships has also been depicted on the subsequent Idea Networking diagram (Fig. 115) through the differing size of the nodes. The Blue dots on the IN diagram denote the *fadaā*'s displacement during the Post-Islamic era, while the red dots denote that of the *tareeq*.

Historical Context (Political, Religious and Urban)			
Ideological		Urban/Arch.	
Sub-Themes	Evidence	Sub-Themes	Evidence
Dissolution of Islamic Caliphate	WWI and the fall of Ottoman Empire.	Freedom	Commemorative monuments - Such as Cairo Tower and Baghdad's Victory Arch (section 7.1)
Arabian Nationalism	"Socialism's most noble missions is to instate humanity, equality and freedom from slavery, and therefore it is not a form of blasphemy as called by religious figures." Nasser (section 7.1)	Historicization	Cairo Tower and Baghdad's statues (section 7.1)
Reformation Strategies	"Muslims could not simply rely on the interpretations of texts provided by medieval clerics, they needed to use reason to keep up with changing times." Abdo (section 7.2)	Western Urban Models	Heliopolis, New Baghdad and Dubai (section 7.2) Al-Maktoum's book <i>My Vision</i>
Islamic Fundamentalism	"Islam is concerned with the question of jihad... and the mobilization of the entire Ummah [Society] into one body." Banna (section 7.1)	The Islamic Ummah as opposed to the Islamic City	Qutb's Book title <i>Traces on the Path</i> .
Political Interventions and Economic Visions	Al-Maktoum's Dubai (section 7.2) See also Footnote (574): "We have at hand the task of sharing one of the most inspiring stories of the last half-century. The story of a city built on unwavering vision... In our quest to deliver on the vision of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing has endeavoured to interpret the visionary ideology into a visual identity for the city. Welcome to Definitely Dubai."	Power and Presence	Dubai Map and Iconic projects (section 7.2) - "Development and investment projects are packaged and tested first as a brand within their own locality [Dubai] and then exported and franchised adaptively as templates of compact urban organization to various spots in the world." Turan (section 7.2)
		Racing - to be the best - to be constantly talked about	Al-Maktoum's Lion and Gazelle Metaphor. Footnote 677. "a public statement of Dubai's continuous efforts to be the best at whatever task they set out to achieve." Social Survey "useless displays of money, created and built by someone else's blood and sweat only to try and prove a point." Social Survey
		Simulation of Modernity through Building and Luxury	"it [Burj Khalifa] represents Dubai's stance in the world, summarizes its development and growing wealth, and puts Dubai on the map." Social Survey "Burj Khalifa represents the multicultural image of Dubai. The whole world is in Burj Khalifa." Social Survey
		Struggles	"living on the never-never and aspiring to a lifestyle that they think they should have because it's the culture of the city. In reality, everyone's running like mad just to stand still." Social Survey "ambition and vision outweigh the means to achieve it." Social Survey
		Stage/Show /Display	"we want to build our own stage for the world's most brilliant ideas." Ali's Film "to be constantly talked about." Social Survey

Figure 110 - Table showing the Initial and Focused Coding for Post-Islamic Arabian Historical Context. By author.

Language (Self, Other and Struggles)		
Literature		Poetry
Sub-Themes	Evidence	Evidence
The Arabian Being in-between Self and daily struggles	Most of our discussions [the Arabs]—after two words no more—are transformed into one subject, praise or complaint, yet they both emanate from the same hidden instinct: an urge for justifying existence. Hakki p.9 (section 7.2).	"Bats return once more to memory... here was the slave Sūq, here they sold my parents and my family ... There was a time when we heard he, himself who abolished slavery, calling upon a free man: who wishes to buy [a slave]." Toukan (section 7.3)
Historical Validation	Mahfouz - Hakki - Hussein and Abdo (sections 7.1 and 7.2).	"No one guided me to myself, I am the guide; I am the guide in between the sea and the desert. From language I was born, on the Indian trade route, to two small tribes, upon which the moon of ancient religions and impossible peace shone." Darwish (section 7.3).
Superiority and Pride	<p>"Yes, like any another cultured Egyptian, loving his country and keen on its pride, I do not want us to meet the European feeling that there exist many differences between us, hence giving him the right to act superior, to belittle us, and, in turn, to force us to despise ourselves." Hussein (section 7.2)</p> <p>Tell the self-praising Arabs: Is there a reason for such pride? Show me among you a high ranking man, show me half an inventor, show me a quarter of a scientist. Show me a gathering filled with benefactors and authors. What knowledge and books are in your schools? What preaching is in your mosques? Is there in your newspapers anything aside from lies? Your words harvested nothing but wars and catastrophes, wake up because Time is gold." Hafedh Ibrahim (section 7.2)</p>	<p>"I am my language, I am a Mu'alakah [ancient Arabic poem], two ... ten... This is my language ... I am my language... This is my language and my miracle... My magic wand, my hanging gardens of Babylon and my Obelisk... My first identity and my true being... The Arab's sacred being in the desert, worshipping the qawafi [the end letters in an Arabic verse] flowing like stars on his cloak and worshipping what he utters." Darwish (section 7.3)</p>
Emotional Foundations	Mahfouz - Hakki and 'Abdo.	The Damascene House Is beyond the architectural text ... The design of our homes ... Is based on an emotional foundation." Qabbani (section 7.3)
Nostalgia	"Oh, Fez my beloved ... You are a wound in my heart and a pain in my memory ... I am bleeding [of love] ... is there a cure? ... in front of your gates I get infused with the greatness of my ancestors." Lahbeel (section 7.3)	"I could not see you at the city's gate, where people are crowding around a sugary hope, and you are still staring at the sea. At the city's gate, I bid farewell to my heart, delving into the city following passers-by, hoping to find someone who would buy an illusion [al-wahm], but there was none. I thought I would succeed in infusing some of our old values into the Sūq, hoping that the muggers would remember." Ibrahim (section 7.3)
Spatial Memory	<p>"A long narrow street surrounded by square buildings, infiltrated by small alleyways that intersect the main street. The alleyways are congested with people... The sky is veiled by the shade of nearby buildings and their protruding balconies, preventing the sun from penetrating its way to the street." Mahfouz (section 7.3)</p> <p>"He felt his way along with his rough stick, his guide in his eternal darkness. He knew where he was by the smell, by the number of steps he had taken, by how well he could hear the chanting, and by his own inspired instincts. Between his house by the graveyard and the alleys was the hardest but also the most delightful part of his route to the Husayn mosque." Mahfouz (section 7.3)</p>	<p>"I open the drawers of memory One . . . then another... I remember the coloured towels as they dance on the door of Hammam al-Khayyatīn as if they were celebrating their national holiday... I remember the Damascene houses with their copper doorknobs... and their interior courtyards that remind you of descriptions of heaven." Qabbani (section 7.3)</p> <p>"In a foggy dream, I strolled along through an old Sūq... Drowned in rose water, the dreamy road expanded my sight and sprinkled sugar through my veins... My soul was drunk with the smell of spices, ivory coffers... and the colours of carpets with the smell of cardamom, henna, and vessels flooding with riches... I was drunk with lust, walking and asking where the shop of small Qurans is." Malaika (section 7.3)</p>
Western Procession	Hussein - Abdo and Hakki.	Hafedh Ibrahim

Figure 111 - Table showing the Initial and Focus Coding for Post-Islamic Arabian Language Circle. By author.

Lived Experience (Rituals - Sensory Experience and Myth)			
Rhetoric/Dialogue		Rituals	
Sub-Theme	Evidence	Sub-Themes	Evidence
The Everyday	"In modern day they serve the purpose for the people living around them in the same city. Because there are people who go buy their daily stuff from there. But for us, in our modern life and because we are living in a big city and we work, we cannot find everything that we want in a Sūq," LD (Appendix 11-A10)	Light - Magic - Dreams - Treasures	"The dome of the master has been lit ... how beautiful are its flags when people come visiting," Jahin's Show "I saw the master [al-Walī] in my dream, so grand ... (the Chorus: so grand!) and a dove floating around him praying to God ... (the Chorus: light of the prophet!) I leaned over his hand and tried to kiss it ... (the Chorus: Kiss it!) ... they woke me up, so I came here (to celebrate his festival)," Jahin "but if you want the real treasures, they have it hidden in there," MF (Appendix 11-A4)
Old - Traditional and Authentic	"Authenticity in everything, basically. In everything, food, architecture, ambience, the way even people deal with you, it's all there. Even, like I said, a simple drink or coffee or whatever or even having something like nuts is definitely a different flavour over there," NA (Appendix 11-A5)	Diversity	"This is the big night, and there are many people, coming from the villages and the cities," Jahin's Show "You have different types of Sūqs in different countries. So, they give you a nice idea about the country you are visiting. You can feel that there is a difference between one Sūq and another. You can see different people, you can see different food. It's different experience from one place to another," LD (Appendix 11-A10)
Identity - Memory and Nostalgia	"I love going there because I enjoy being there. I enjoy walking with history, that's what I love doing," MA (Appendix 11-A6) That's actually the time when the old town was given the name of a Sūq... It first had a religious and cultural meaning then it had an economical influence. And from that time until today it actually didn't change... So, till now we kept it as it is because it's our identity and we are proud of it and it shouldn't be touched by modernity and by the new business men and capitalism and all of this modernity stuff. IA (Appendix 11-A7)	Multiple Activities	Jahin's Show: the Arajouz, the vendors, the coffee shop, the zikr circle and the circus. I enjoy long walks with plenty of things to look at, and there is no better place than a Sūq because every corner is engaging. It has something [pause] and you have to look once and twice to actually see it right... plenty of colours could actually be a bit dazzling at the beginning, so you really have to look into it. MF (Appendix 11-A4)
Cultural Norms	"We have to respect the people that are there, because most people in the Sūqs they have different traditions. So, when you are wearing decently you accommodate everyone's thinking and their lifestyle," LD (Appendix 11-A10)	Crowds	"It is very crowded ... How many children got lost!" Jahin's Show "It's not, it's not my favourite place ... Cuz it's very crowded," AA (Appendix 11-A9) "Sūqs are all the same... They look alike, they are all very narrow... emmm... alleys and very crowded, very loud voices everywhere. Small shops," AA (Appendix 11-A9)
Socio-urban Rituals	you have to go through the whole thing and they are usually long roads of shops and you have to check out everything... haggle for prices... that's the fun of the Sūq, you have to haggle even though I don't know how to, I try [giggles] but I still don't know. But it's fun, it is always fun even if it is 100 degrees outside, it is still fun. MF (Appendix 11-A4) "I love going there because I enjoy being there. I enjoy walking with history, that's what I love doing," MA (Appendix 11-A6)	Alleys	"there are these very old narrow alleys, ok, where the balconies touch each other, it is so old and ancient... The houses and the alleys, they are so narrow. So, you see the building, you see the people, you see the outlets, you see people selling all sorts of stuff: books to shoes, the food, it's just so much to take as in an experience," MA (Appendix 11-A6) I like to go to alleys and experience these hidden gems. NA (Appendix 11-A5)
Urban/Arch. Experience	Alleys - Coffee Shop - Houses - Shops (All) "I like to go to alleys and experience these hidden gems," NA (Appendix 11-A5) The presence of the Sūq has a very strong relationship to the mosque because Muslims have to go to the mosque five times a day, so on your way you might want to pick up some bread, some cheese, whatever you wanna pick up, for the family back at home. SN (Appendix 11-A8)	Display and Visibility	"because the UAE is already like one big incredible EXPO." Ali's film - The interview description of food preparations and different displays, Interviews MA and LD. "the Sūq is the street itself, the street itself is the market not the shop. So, the street itself you should have people putting their product in the street... The street is a pedestrian movement, even if it not a pedestrian street, like in Cairo, people are selling in the street. SN (Appendix 11-A8)
Sensory Experience	"you just go into a Sūq and the way it looks, how the carts are being organized, the way people are moving around, the way spices are being displayed, the actual [emmm] the ceiling is amazing, honestly," NA (Appendix 11-A5)	Sensory Experience	"Sometimes you see a lot of old architecture and sometimes you find these really old places like cafés... sometimes you even find these shops that have not been discovered so much and they have really nice authentic things," NA (Appendix 11-A5) Jahin's Show: the architecture and the different type of food. The interviews description of different food types, music and sights.
Cultural Diversity	"But in a Sūq no, you have different corners of different pieces of art, different feelings of people, Different People [assertive voice], you know. You kinda see how other people see it too," MF (Appendix 11-A4) "Maybe the overall look of the Sūq is the same, but definitely the type of products or how they are selling or how they are approaching people could be different from one place to another," AA (Appendix 11-A9)	Procession and the passageway	Jahin's Show - Opening act. "Most Sūqs are on ground level... But the lower part always opens up, and the shops extend in the street or in the public realm... allowing the activation of the passageway" SN (Appendix 11-A8)
Vendors	"A lot of tourists will go to the central Sūq because they want to get closer to the culture of that country or that city and they want to feel this connection," MF (Appendix 11-A4)	Dissolution of Physical and Social Barriers	Interviews - Observations and Jahin's Show. "So, when you are sitting in the restaurant someone would throw a funny comment and everyone would giggle, you know. These places don't have the barriers that are imposed by modern societal structures, no. You go there, you are so down to earth, everybody is the same, everybody is coming with a good spirit. So, you sit there and connect with people... like sitting in a living room where everyone is talking, everyone is just so natural." MA (Appendix 11-A6)
Togetherness and Communication	"I prefer to go with someone, because sometimes I feel intimidated in the Sūqs it's too busy. Also, when you see something you like to share, when you are amazed about something you like to share because you are not going there just to buy. You are going to look around and to see nice stuff. So, I like to share, like 'look at this piece,' or 'this is nice do you think I can buy it.' So, it is nice to talk about it, it's an experience by itself," LD (Appendix 11-A10)		

Figure 112 - Table showing the Initial and Focused Coding for Post-Islamic Arabian Lived Experience. By author.

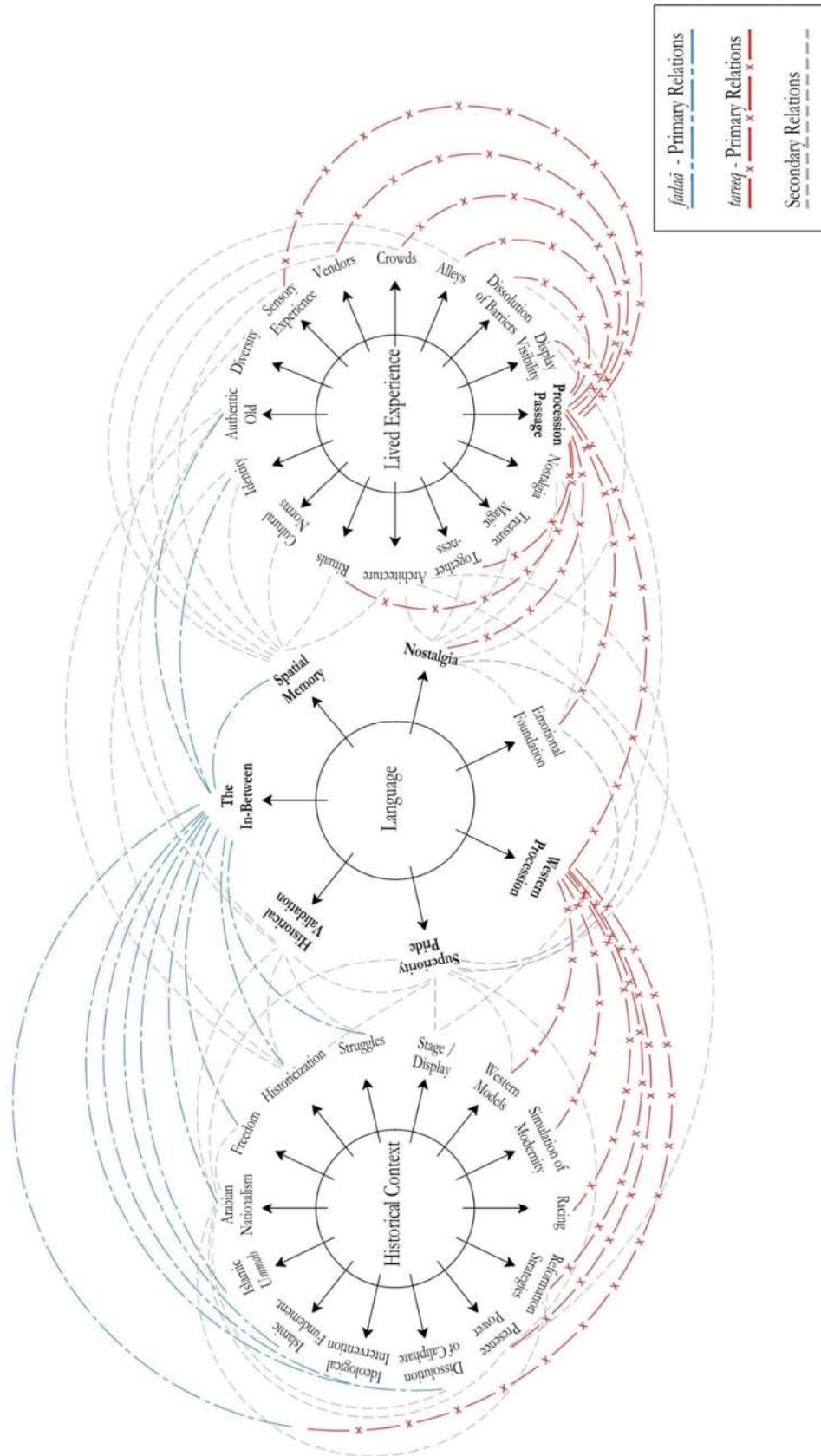


Figure 113 - Diagram showing preliminary connections between the different sub-themes in relation to the larger categories of History - Language - Lived Experience. By author.

	A		B		C		D		E		F	
	In-between		Procession / Passageway		Superiority and Pride		Nostalgia		Historical Validation		Spatial Memory	
1	Dissolution of Ottoman Caliphate		Western Models		Presence and Power		Treasures / Magic		Historicization		Identity	
2	Freedom		Racing		Stage/Display		Emotional Foundation		Struggles		Rituals	
3	Arabian Nationalism		Simulating Modernity through luxury building		Authenticity / Old		The Alleys		Diversity		Buildings, Cafes and Crowds	
4	Ideological Interventions		Reformation Strategies		Architecture		Togetherness		The Festival		Vendors	
5	Islamic Fundamentalism		Everyday Practices				The Sūq as a Passageway				Cultural Norms	
6	Islamic Ummah						Dissolution of Barriers				Sensory Experience	
7											Display and Visibility	

Figure 114 - Table showing the Theoretical Coding for Post-Islamic Arabian references. By author.

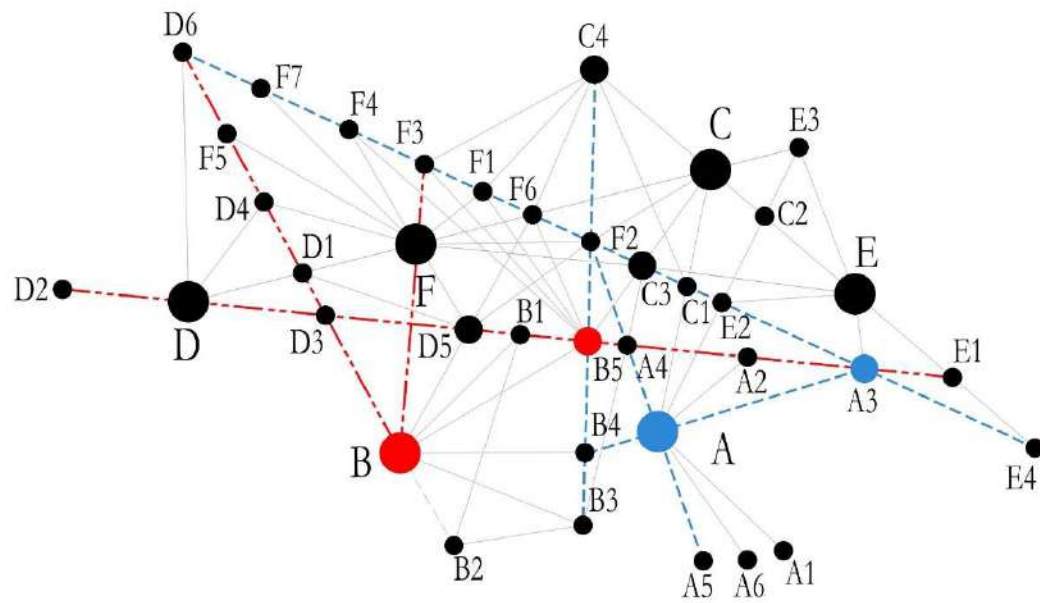


Figure 115 - Idea Network Diagram for Post-Islamic Arabia, showing the major thematic clusters and the relationship between the different evidences. By author.

7.7.2 Thematic Analysis: Idea Networking Diagram

As explained in sections 3.3 and 3.5.3, Idea Networking (IN) is an analysis method that aims at identifying different clusters of meanings and their relationship to each other. The IN Diagram above uses the relationships proposed by the initial, focused and theoretical coding stages, to re-map the identified themes and to establish their theoretical links. By doing so, IN enhances the credibility of the thematic process and suggests different possible narratives to explain the development of the Sūq's meaning in Post-Islamic Arabia. Starting with the larger themes, the IN maps them as bigger points on the diagram (A, B, C, D, E and F). Afterwards, all sub-themes, or categorical themes, are positioned as smaller nodal points, whose links to each other and to the bigger themes create variable narratives (the dotted bold lines).

As illustrated above, the IN diagram suggests the presence of several dualities in Post-Islamic Arabia's experience and understanding of Sūq-ness. One duality that emerges through most of the collected evidence is 'emotional foundation' (D2) and historicization (E1), which together demarcate the nostalgic (D) understanding of the Arabian Sūq today (Fig. 115a). The persistence of this duality in most Post-Islamic literature suggests that the Sūq is a representative of

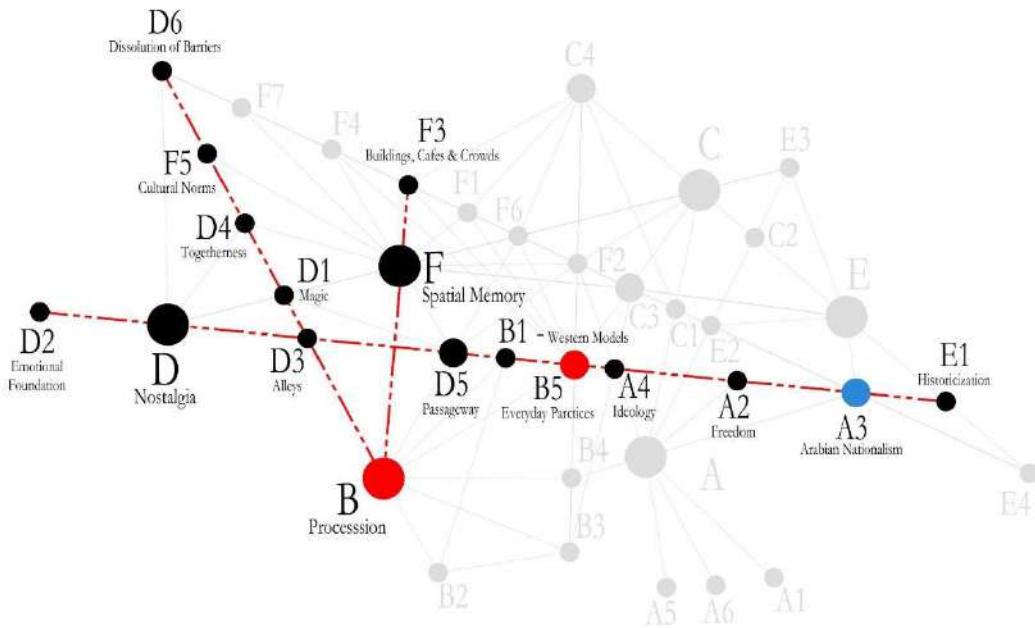


Figure 115a - Idea Network Diagram for Post-Islamic Arabian *tarreeg*, highlighting the duality D2-E1. By author.

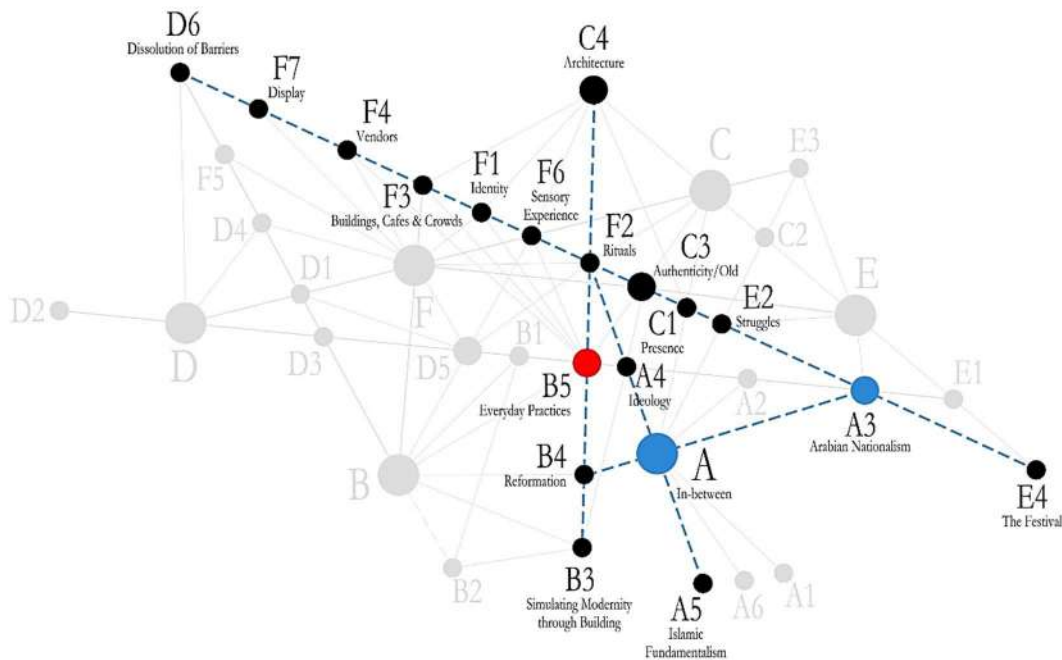


Figure 115b - Idea Network Diagram for Post-Islamic Arabian *fadaa*, highlighting the duality D6-E4. By author.

Arabian history, positioning present and past within an ‘imaginary’ reciprocate relationship. For, the diagram proposes that the Sūq’s everyday practices (B5) today are affected by some religious (predominantly Islamic) interventions (A4) and rituals (F2) that endow the space with meanings that might or might not be related to the historical reality of the space. Another possible intervention includes the effects of the previously discussed Orientalist readings of the Sūq and its uniform urban planning strategies (sections 1.4 and 4.3). The case studies (section 7.3) signalled the presence of other ideological infiltrations that were directly related to Arabia’s political situation during the mid-20th century. Also, Jahin’s show and some poetry hinted at some prevailing Nasserite ideas (A3) of the time regarding equality, freedom and salvation. For, the show’s processional ending towards the mosque not only reinforces the Sūq’s Islamic meanings as a passageway (D5) towards light, but possibly also transforms the Sūq’s alleys (D3), buildings and different cultural activities (F5) into symbols of Arabian freedom (A2). Such reading suggests further links between the Sūq’s Islamic understanding as a heavenly bridge and its Post-Islamic Arabian perception as a freedom path, hence revealing a new displacement of the Arabian *tareeq*’s meaning. This meaning has been also communicated through contemporary poetry and literature (section 7.5), which seem to propagate the region’s conformity in terms of cultural identity, future aspirations and shared history. In contrast, the interviews suggest that traditional Sūqs differ from one Arab city to the other in terms of urban layout, architectural articulation and cultural products, as discussed by LD, HI and SN. They also described how a traditional Sūq’s daily lived experience witnesses ample acts of communication as well as trespassing, as suggested by AA, LD, MF and IA, hence playing a big role in shaping the space’s understanding in Arabian consciousness.

The second duality suggested by the IN diagram (Fig. 115b) describes the relationship between the Sūq’s nostalgic image as a barrier-free space (D6) and its festive memories (E4). While this relationship is intensified through the experience of different urban structures (F3), vendors (F4), rituals (F2), sensations (F6) and displays (F7), it acquires important social meanings through the

symbolic associations that the Sūq's everyday practices (B5) make room for. For, the study suggested that the space's architectural amalgam endows an Arab with a sense of presence and power (C1), as implied from the interview responses that see the Old as a symbol of authenticity (C3) and identity (F1).⁷⁰⁰ Contemporary poetry (section 7.5) extends these meanings to include the struggles (E2) that are facing the Arab World today, using the Sūq—both metaphorically and literally—to describe the Arabian social, political or cultural situation. In this way, these readings imply that the Sūq is a representative of the Arabian *fadaā* and that Sūq-ness is a historical *tareeq* of struggles, conflicts and disclosures (E2). Here, the IN points to some further clues that can assist in understanding the relationship between old (B3) and new forms of building (C4) in Post-Islamic Arabia. These clues, which are extracted from the urban case studies (section 7.3), suggest that the different reformation strategies (B4) and architectural developments of the era (C4) work in tandem not only to simulate modernity (B3) and to implement some political visions (A4) alone but also to assert Arabian presence (C1) in world events, offering themselves as 'pragmatics for the production of Arabian subjectivity.'⁷⁰¹ For Guattari, the production of subjectivity is a process involving a complex rupture of elements that "can exist at the level of megapoles as easily as at the level of an individual's language games."⁷⁰² Guattari believes that such rupture is best understood through poetry, which "might have more to teach us than economic science, the human sciences and psychoanalysis combined."⁷⁰³

Considering this argument, it is understood from Post-Islamic poetry, the puppet show, Ali's Film and interviews that the magical dimension of traditional Sūqs (D1) points beyond its mythic denotations to two important structures of meaning, with the first operating on a particular/local level and the other reaching out to a universal/global one. The particular level seeks the Sūq's socio-spatial capacity (F) in preserving cultural norms (F5) and barrier-free communication

⁷⁰⁰ Refer to Appendix 11.A, interview transcripts for MF, NA, IA and MA.

⁷⁰¹ Félix Guattari, *Chaosmosis: An Ethico-aesthetic Paradigm*, translated by Paul Bains and Julian Pefanis (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 21.

⁷⁰² Guattari, *Chaosmosis*, 21.

⁷⁰³ Ibid.

(D6), which are conceptualized through walking in the alleys (D3), negotiating with vendors (F4), interacting with strangers and sitting in coffee shops (F3). The universal level seeks the Sūq's allegorical function as a progressive path, hence allowing the region to validate its identity (F1) in relation to both its past glories and aspired future progress. This is readily manifest in some of the era's literary products through the metaphors of 'Western procession' and 'race for excellence.'⁷⁰⁴ Accordingly, it is possible to argue that the mythic belief in the Sūq's 'magical' dimension attempts not to mask the Sūq's current deteriorating urban structure by revamping a plethora of historical symbols alone but also intends to "aspire to the technological and scientific modernity characterising the contemporary subjective cocktail."⁷⁰⁵ This possibly explains why the ideas of superiority and pride preside as recurrent themes in Post-Islamic Arabia's reformation manifestoes (section 7.2), case studies (section 7.3), poetry (section 7.5) and media productions (sections 7.6), pointing beyond themselves to some hidden struggles. At times, these struggles are translated in the form of a 'blind' dependence on historical references/interpretations (E)—both religious and nationalist—that see authenticity (C3) in the old and not in the new. At other times, these struggles result in some 'rebellious' reactions against the Old, as portrayed in Dubai's demolishing of the old structures at *Bastakia*, favouring new models of development (C4) to instate their presence and power (C1) and to effectively communicate with Western investors. These readings imply that the Post-Islamic *fadaā* symbolizes the region's struggles, mirroring its in-between position (A) between a romantic urge for revamping an imagined glorious past and a need for validating its presence (C1) in relation to modern-day realities. Poetry and the interviews suggest that the traditional Sūq plays a pivotal role in this discourse by means of displacing the original significance of the *tareeq* from a connecting passageway or spiritually illuminating journey into a nostalgic 'walk with history.'⁷⁰⁶

⁷⁰⁴ HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, *My Vision: Challenges in the Race for Excellence*, Arabic 3rd ed. (Dubai: Motive Publishing, 2013).

⁷⁰⁵ Guattari, *Chaosmosis*, 4.

⁷⁰⁶ MA, interview, Appendix 11A.6, section 10:4.

7.8 Conclusion of Part (03)

The chapter explored variable facets of the Post-Islamic Arabian city's normal and festive experiences, using poetry, literature, urban case studies, media productions and interviews as primary sources. Through these sources, it has been suggested that the experience of the traditional *Sūq* amplifies the relationship between people, place and objects. Moreover, the chapter identified some important links between the *Sūq*'s Post-Islamic position and the original meaning of the *fadaā/tareeq* duality. Here, ideas like identity, pride and freedom emerge as some of the mostly reciprocated *Sūq*-related meanings today, which together seem to delineate the boundaries of a Post-Islamic Arab's understanding of the *fadaā*. Likewise, ideas like historicization, nostalgia and Old/authenticity seem to have played a big role in displacing the meaning of the *tareeq* by constantly reaching out to the past in order to evoke the region's past glories and to excavate the *Sūq*'s 'hidden treasures.' Whether such past denotes an ancient one, where *Sūqs* acted as nodes along a horizontal path in the physical void-ness of the desert, or to a more recent one, where *Sūqs* symbolizes some spiritual stations demarcating a vertical path away from the void-ness of the mundane world, the chapter's findings suggest a persistent nostalgic outlook in Arabia's Post-Islamic understanding of *Sūq*-ness. Also, evidences hinted how ideology, whether political or religious, created dialectic tensions in a Post-Islamic Arab's perception of both Old and New, where the former seems to relay ideas of identity/authenticity and the latter seems to imply the abolishment of obsolete references. The chapter's thematic analysis concluded that such dialectic relationship is a possible subject for future research, which ought to explore the merits and/or drawbacks of making use of a past object, such as the *Sūq*, to produce "a new variety of a mixed semiotic, which in itself might suggest the possibility of an altogether new [model of thinking]" in Arabia.⁷⁰⁷

⁷⁰⁷ Simon O'Sullivan, "Pragmatics for the Production of Subjectivity: Time for Probe-Heads," *Journal for Cultural Research* 10, no. 4 (October 2006): 317.

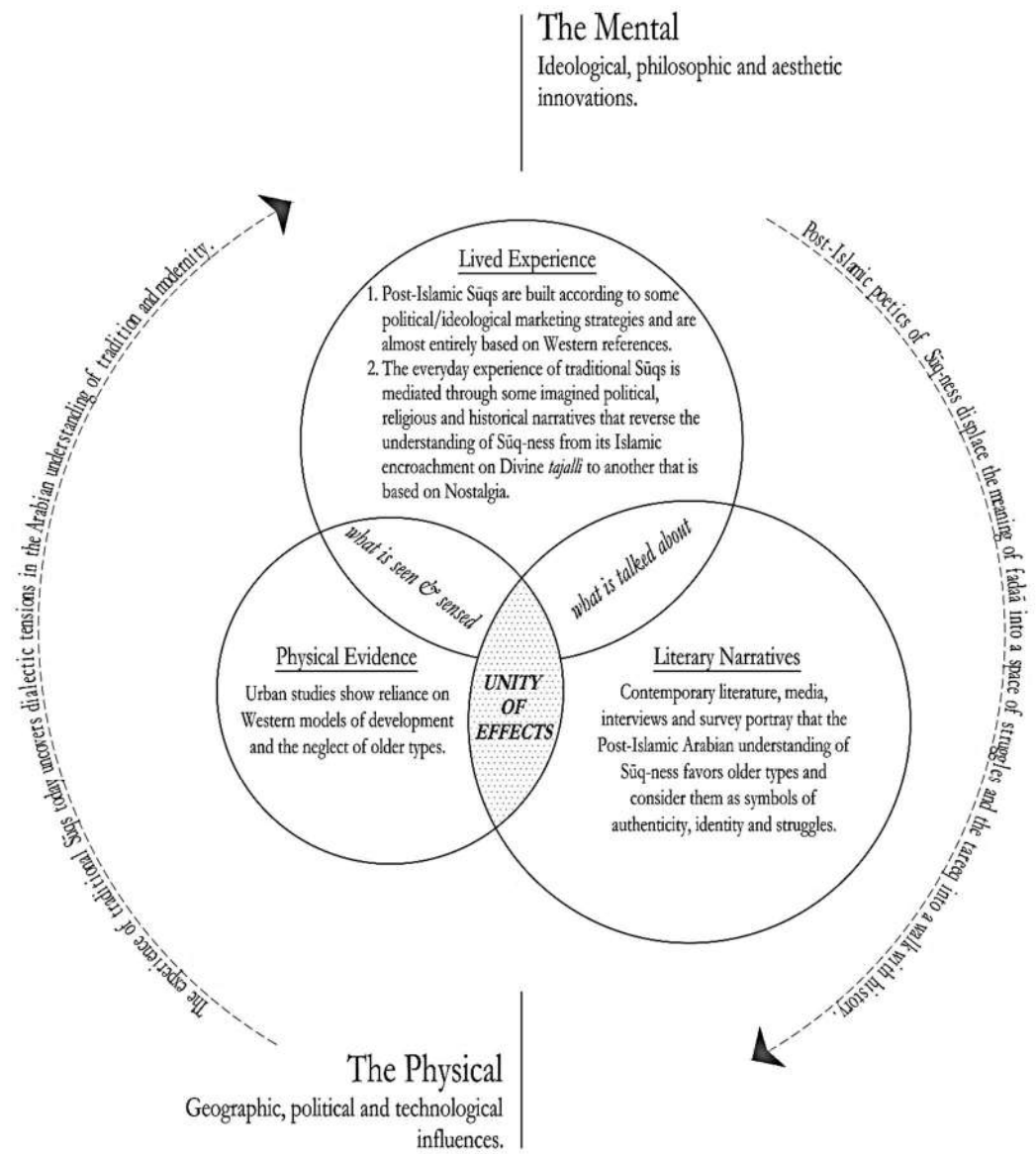


Figure 116 - Diagram showing the triangulation of Post-Islamic findings.
By author.



التأليف

8

Chapter Eight

Research Findings, or *The Fusion of Horizons* **The Arabian Sūq's Past, Present and Future**

8.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a synthesis of the Arabian Sūq's story, as understood from the evidences and thematic analyses undertaken in chapters 5-7. The chapter attempts to fulfil the bigger aim of the research and to answer its questions, relating them to the theoretical framework and reviewed literature (sections 1.2 and 1.4). So, the chapter revisits the findings of the previous sections (5.7, 6.6 and 7.7) to formulate a panoramic understanding of the Sūq's urban development in relation to the social traditions and linguistic conventions that it made room for throughout the three historical horizons discussed in chapters 5-7. To fuse these 'smaller' horizons into a holistic narrative, the chapter starts with a discussions

of the research aim, scope and delimitations. Afterwards, the findings of the different historical parts are synthesized, explaining their relation to existing literature and to the range of possible answers they provide to the research's main questions and objectives (section 1.6).

8.2 Research Problem, Scope and Process

The research started by raising the question whether there is more to discover about the history of Arabian Sūqs and their socio-urban meaning beyond some existing Islamic readings (section 1.2). By examining some of the available literature on the subject (sections 4.4-4.6), the research questioned the viability of some current methods that marginalize the value of everyday practices and poetics as important tools for understanding the Arabian Sūq's development. Contrastingly, the research based its theoretical paradigm and methodological model on Gadamer's concepts of the Hermeneutic Circle and Fusion of Horizons (section 3.2), through which the socio-urban development of an Arabian Sūq has been cross-examined in terms of its physical structure and its effect on people's lived experiences. Accordingly, the research found that while it is not possible to assume that there is no such thing as an Islamic City, confirming the arguments of Bianca, Abu-Lughod and Alsayyad (sections 1.2 and 4.2), it is also impossible to suggest that the Arabian city is devoid of other meanings beyond its Islamic interpretation. Also, the research argued that the emphasis on Arabia's Islamic period alone often fails to answer many questions relating to an Arab's understanding of being-in-space and being-with-others, given its confinement to only one historical situation and to a limited set of evidences, which tend to offer some generalized conclusions.

For, as shown in Fig. 117 that illustrates the development of the Arab-speaking world's physical boundaries during the three historical eras in discussion (sections 5.2, 6.2 and 7.2), it is evident that a definition of an Arabian space is hard to establish away from the historical and geo-political situation it refers to. The top map shows that Pre-Islamic Arabia's physical boundary was confined to a limited geographic span, dominated by an expansive desert. Starting with the

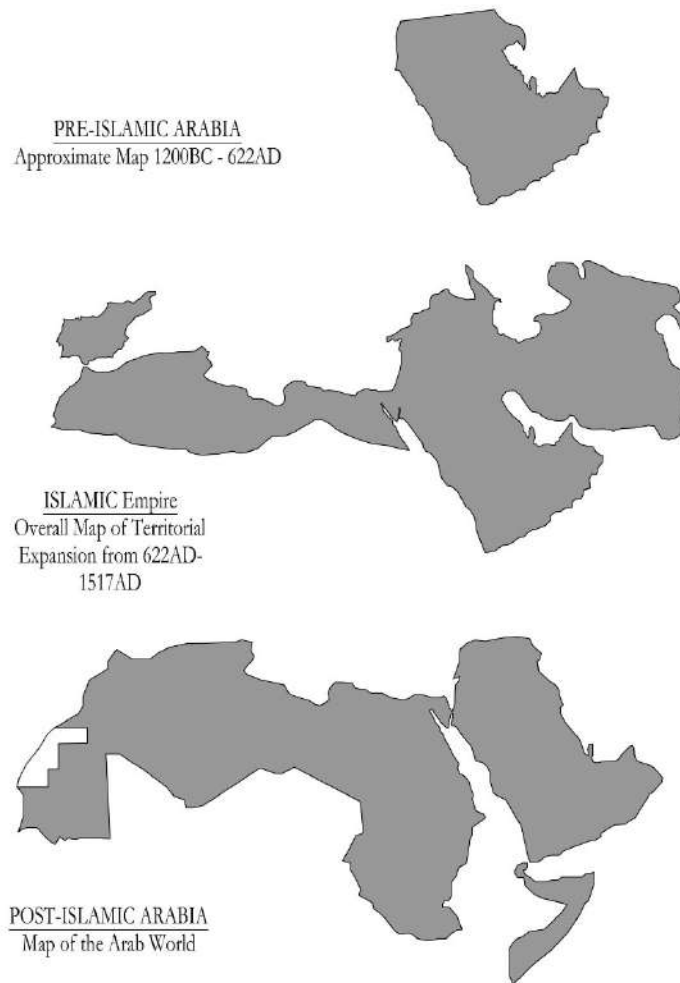


Figure 117 - Graphic Maps portraying the expansion/retraction of the Arabian physical space during the three historical eras in question. By author. Top, after Karl von Spruner's 1865 rendering of Arabia. Middle, after Khan Academy's map of territorial expansion of the Islamic Empire. Bottom, after the official map of the Arab World, published on the Arab League's website.

etymological root of the term 'Arab,' Chapter 5 described the historical context of the Pre-Islamic Arabian lifeworld (section 5.2), proposing that it was influenced by the different possibilities that the trinity of language, trade route and desert made room for. The chapter also explained how seasonal Sūqs were among the most important cultural events of the era, allowing Arabs a safe channel for communication, movement and participation in world events (section 5.5.2, 5.6.1 and 5.6.2). By exploring different urban settlements in the Pre-Islamic Arab region, the chapter found some inconsistency in existing literature that consider Mecca and Medina as chief representatives of Pre-Islamic Arabia (section 5.6), since they ignored the contributions of other Arabian towns that are not affiliated with the later Islamic situation.

Similarly, Chapter 6 discussed the development of the Sūq during Arabia's Islamic period, exploring the influence of its expanding geography—the middle map—on a Muslim Arab's understanding of space. This chapter pointed to an important dichotomy concerning the experience of this new territorial expansion. First is the effect of regional cultures in shaping an Islamic space; and second is the effect of the Pre-Islamic Arabian understanding of space on the identity of conquered lands. While the former point has been briefly touched upon in section 6.5, the latter was explored in chapters 4 and 6. Here, the research discussed how the Islamic franchised formula of “Mosque + Sūq + Bath” (section 4.7) played a pivotal role in creating some perceptual affinity in the urban layout of different Islamic towns. Sections 6.2.1 and 6.2.2 also explained how some Quranic metaphors allowed these planning strategies to bond the Islamic empire's disparate social territories, making room for a shared mythic horizon that guided the development of Islamic Arabia's socio-urban discourse. This is traceable through the works of many Arab and non-Arab Muslim thinkers, whose works have been reviewed in sections 6.2.1, 6.2.2 and 6.5. Accordingly, the research suggested that while the Islamic town's socio-cultural sphere cannot be defined as distinctly Arab, its urban planning strategies and participation dynamics were still influenced by some Pre-Islamic Arabian references, which have been socially and religiously negotiated to fit the ‘new’ Islamic *situation*. Many such references were probably transmitted through the first Arab conquerors and then later developed by the successive Arabian dynasties of the Umayyads, Abbasids and Fatimids (sections 6.3 and 6.6). The research explored the physical manifestations of this proposition through the Sūq's urban development, its social segregation strategies and political regulation policies (sections 6.3 and 6.5.2); and examined its poetic resonances through the era's Quranic interpretations, scientific explanations, travel diaries, poetry and Sufist contemplations (sections 6.3-6.5).

While the research limited the investigation of the Sūq during its Pre-Islamic and Islamic periods to those regions where Arabian dynasties ruled, the geographic boundaries—bottom map—of what is coined as the ‘Arab World’ today, posed further problems. For, the map of the Arab World, or what is

referred to in this research as Post-Islamic Arabia, encompasses vast geographic expanses that are bundled together in response to some political needs and few uniting characteristics, like language (Arabic) and common interests.⁷⁰⁸ This territorial entity, seen as one of the consequences of Arab Nationalism, resulted in redefining the identity of the region (section 7.2), where an Arab is defined today as, “a person whose language is Arabic, who lives in an Arabic country, and who is in sympathy with the aspirations of the Arabic people.”⁷⁰⁹ Chapter 7 explored the effects of Arab Nationalism and its role in establishing and developing this rather inconsistent definition, hinting at its troublesome relation to both the dissolved Ottoman Caliphate and the proponents of Islamic fundamentalism (section 7.2). For, this definition, which intended to grant the ‘Arab World’ an identity away from that of the Ottoman Caliphate, suggests a detachment from the Islamic situation, hence Post-Islamic. Yet, this new identity still depended on Arabic language as well as Islam as unifying factors of its diverse socio-cultural groups, suggesting the persistence of the Islamic situation. Aware of such a conundrum, the research sought not to challenge this suggested definition but opted instead to examine the possibility that there could be some shared meanings that are reciprocated among Post-Islamic Arabian communities throughout their experience of traditional Sūqs. Accordingly, chapter 7 examined whether and how the traditional Sūq’s experience in Post-Islamic Arabia has changed from its traditional Islamic perspective, previously discussed in chapters 4 and 6. Using urban case studies, poetry, literature, a puppet show and interviews as primary sources, the chapter thus attempted to enquire “into the real and imaginary movements of [Arab] people—dead or alive—their words and ideas in space, between locations and in time.”⁷¹⁰

⁷⁰⁸ Wein, *Arab Nationalism*, 2-3.

⁷⁰⁹ Reynolds, *Arab folklore*, 1.

⁷¹⁰ Wein, *Arab Nationalism*, 2.

8.3 Research Model of Investigation and Questions

Considering the above, the research sought a theoretical framework that would allow the study of the Arabian Sūq phenomenon to examine both physical and literary evidence as indivisible parts of a holistic narrative. As discussed in chapters 2 and 3, Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics was deemed appropriate here since the aim was "to understand the phenomenon itself in its unique and historical concreteness... [and to] understand how this man, this people, or this state is what it has become or, more generally, how it happened that it is so."⁷¹¹ Using the 'Hermeneutic Circle' and 'Fusion of Horizons' as methodological tools of interpretation (section 3.2), the research divided the study into three historical parts: Pre-Islamic (1200BC-620AD), Islamic (620AD-1923AD) and Post-Islamic Arabia (1923AD-date). By doing so, the research attempted to propose an interpretive framework that would not only question what we currently know about the Sūq's socio-urban value (fore-structures) but also to understand the historical development of some accumulated prejudices related to its everyday experience. The circular movement between different historical horizons assisted the research to examine the relevance of some of these prejudices in relation to the particular historical context they belong to. Such circularity required a constant forward and backward movement between the subject's different historical horizons (Pre-Islamic - Islamic - Post-Islamic) and its variables (History-Language-Lived Experience), granting the research the ability to cross-examine its findings at every cross point (Fig. 118). The results of this process are illustrated in Fig. 119, which depicts the study's application of the Hermeneutic Circle and lists its findings in relation to the three historical horizons in question and to the research variables. Thus, this chapter intends to create a holistic narrative that can possibly fulfil the research's objectives (sections 1.6 – 9.4) and answer the following questions:

⁷¹¹ Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 4.

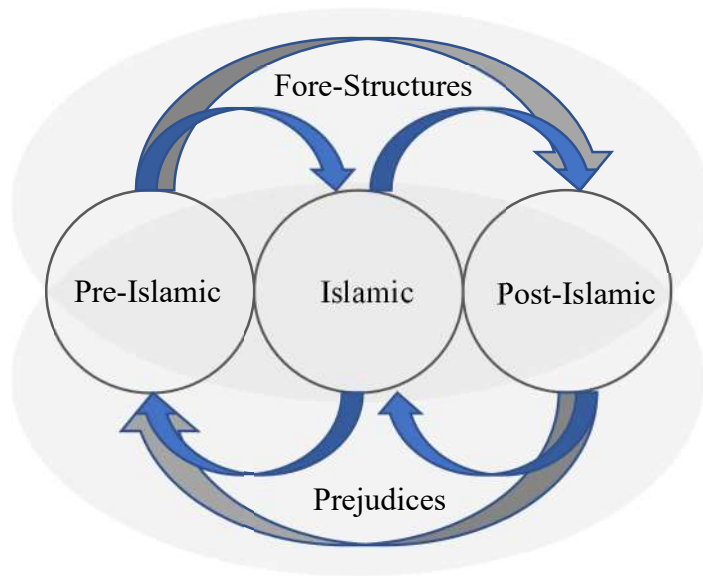
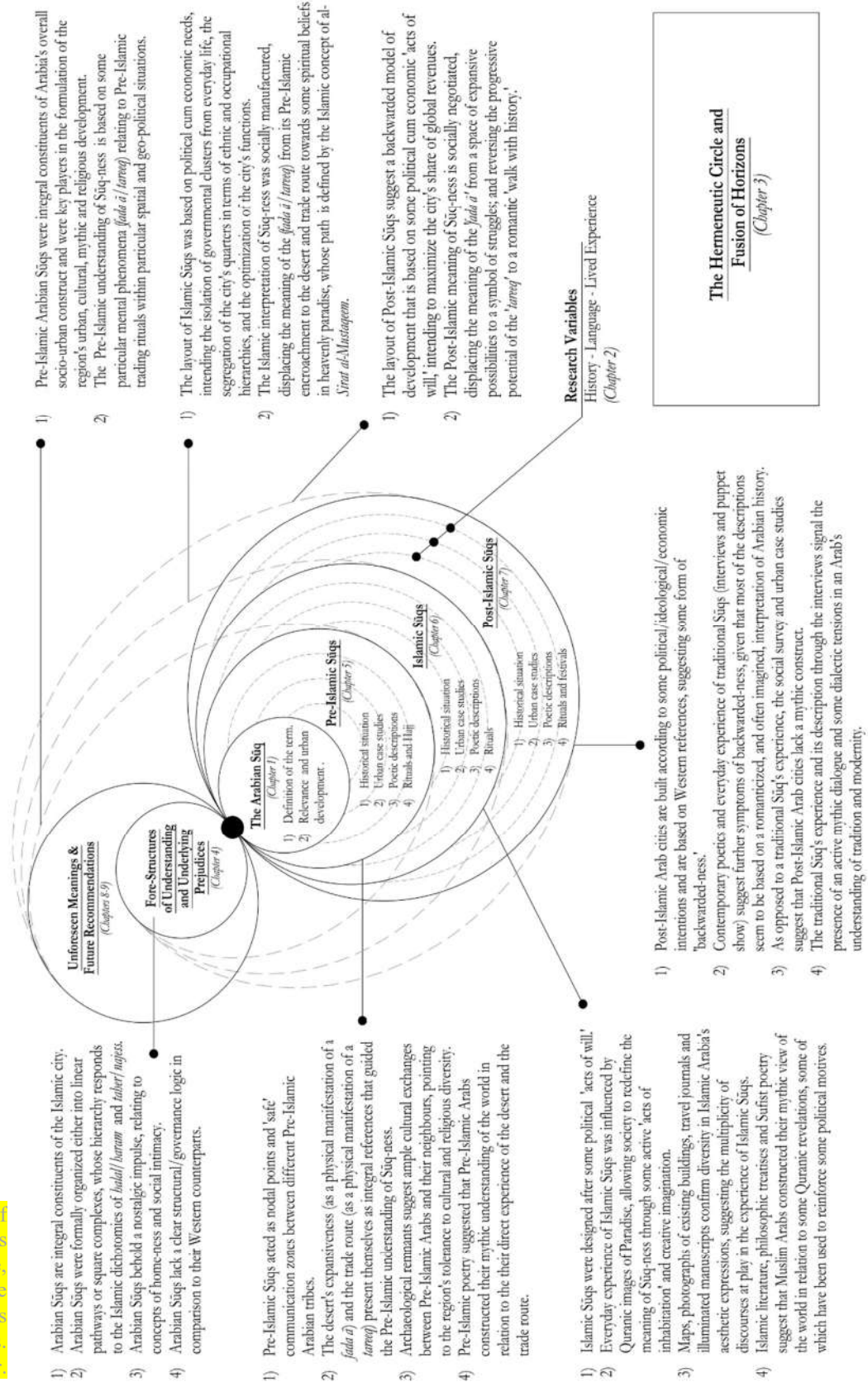


Figure 118 - Simplified Diagram of research design model and process. By author.

- a) What do we currently know of the Arabian Sūq phenomenon? How was it previously examined? What are some of the prejudices that encircle our current understanding of Sūqs?
- b) What more can Gadamer's hermeneutics contribute to the bulk of existing knowledge on Sūqs?
- c) In the light of Gadamer's hermeneutic philosophy, what is the relevance of the Arabian Sūq to the socio-urban development of Arab cities? What are the particular patterns and structures of experience that allude to the Sūq-ness of a Sūq?
- d) Does the Sūq possess any poetic meaning? How did such meaning(s), if any, change over time and how did it affect the space's sensory experiences and everyday rituals?

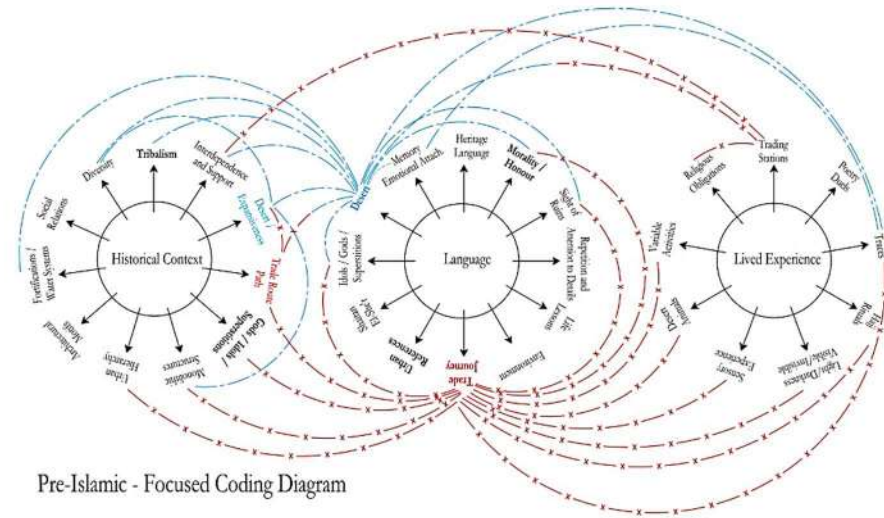
The following synthesis, or Fusion of Horizons, will attempt to validate the research's claim of answering the above questions. Discussion of questions (a) and (b) is presented in section 8.3.1 and 8.3.2, extending to sections 8.3.3, 8.3.4 and 8.3.5, which together deal with questions (c) and (d).

Figure 119 - Diagram of the Research's Hermeneutic Circle, showing each of the historical parts' findings and their interpretations. By author.

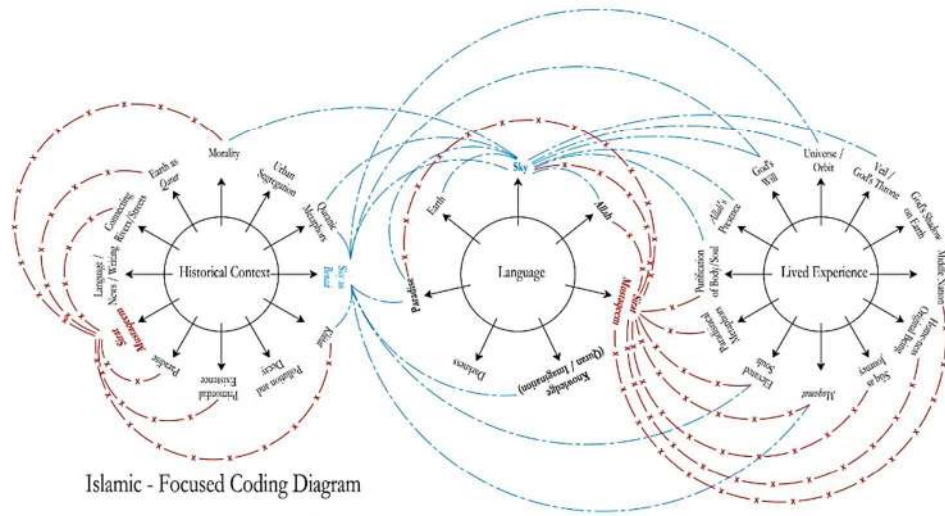


8.4 Fusion of Horizons, or Synthesis of Findings

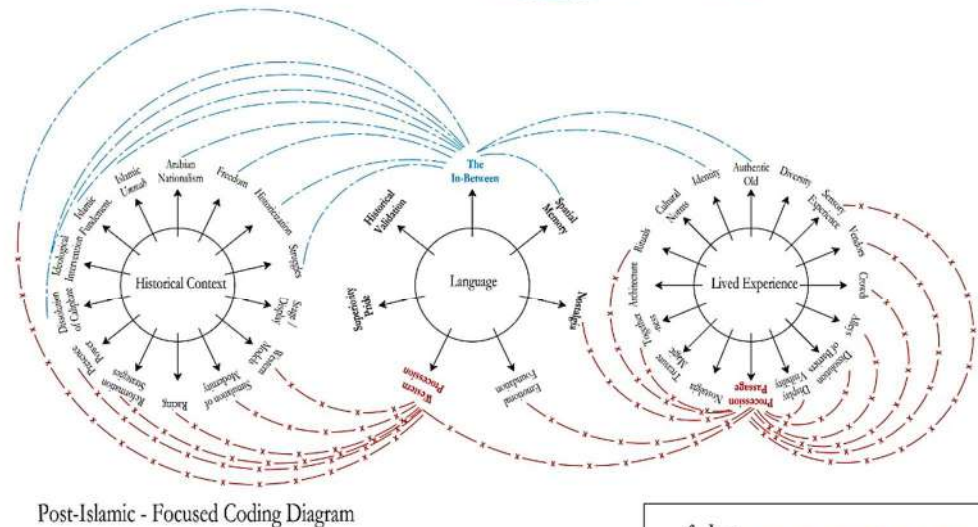
The case studies and poetic/literary narratives, discussed in chapters 5, 6 and 7, suggest that the traditional Sūq's meaning transcends its instrumental urban use, revealing a strong socio-cultural relationship between the Sūq's physical development in time and an Arab community's understanding of spatiality. This is implied through several recurrent themes—primary and secondary—that have been transmitted and/or displaced throughout the three historical eras in question. As previously elaborated, the research found that these themes culminate in two overarching themes, *fadaā* (blue) and *tareeq* (red), representing together what seems to be the essence of an Arabian Sūq's socio-urban meaning (Fig. 121). The historical development of these two overarching themes (Fig. 120-121) suggest the presence of some active social dialogue that displaced the meaning of each in response to some contingent historical events. These displacements were not traceable through the Sūq's physical appearance alone but also through its poetic descriptions and modes of social participation, both normal and festive. In order to interpret the historical effects of such displacements, the following sections will synthesize the findings of the previous chapters in the form of Focus Coding (FCD) and Idea Networking (IN) diagrams, which together will allow the research to answer its questions and fulfil its objectives. First, the FCD (Fig. 122) proposes some links between the larger themes identified in the three different historical horizons, using the findings and the discussions of the previous chapters as the basis for the proposed links (sections 3.5.3, 5.7, 6.6 and 7.7). Relying on each chapter's larger themes and some sub-themes that played a pivotal role in shaping the understanding of the *fadaā/tareeq* duality at each historical era, the FCD traces the trajectory of the *fadaā/tareeq* duality and locates the mostly reciprocated themes that seem to dominate the Sūq's socio-urban discourse and experience. Second, the FCD's themes and relationships are translated into an IN diagram (Fig. 123), which attempts to propose different narratives of the Sūq's socio-urban development.



Pre-Islamic - Focused Coding Diagram



Islamic - Focused Coding Diagram



Post-Islamic - Focused Coding Diagram



Figure 120 - Compiled Focused Coding Diagrams, showing the development of the *fadaā/tareeq* in the three historical stages. By author

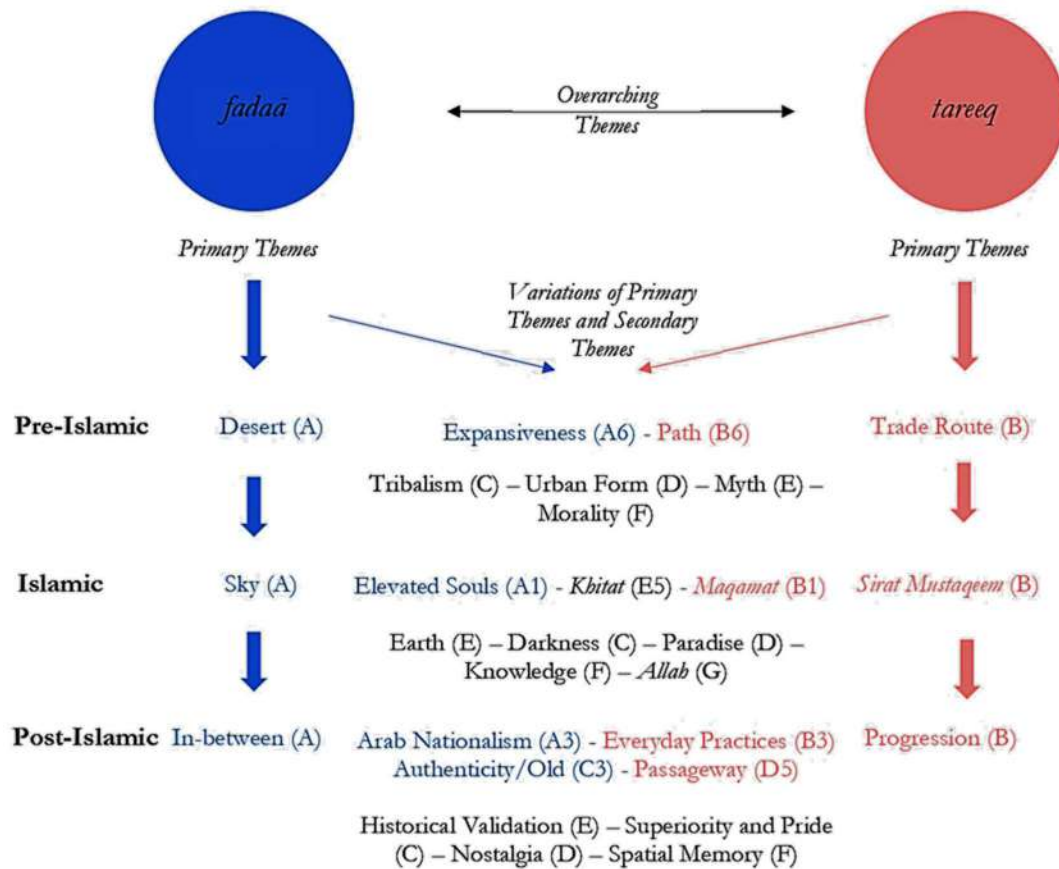


Figure 121 - Diagram portraying the identified Primary and Secondary themes of the research in relation to the three historical horizons of investigation and the *fadaā/tareeq* duality.

The FCD (Fig. 122) suggests that the most important themes in the Sūq's story are In-between, Nostalgia and Passageway, owing to a concentration of relationships that these three themes present in relation to the totality of all other themes. As shown in Figures 120-121, the meaning of the *fadaā/tareeq* duality during the Pre-Islamic era was chiefly anchored to some desert-bound experiences, both visible and invisible. Through its seemingly endless expansiveness, or *fadaā*, the desert was constantly shaped by the different travels, encounters, exchanges, feuds and even love stories permeating its trade route (section 5.4.2). Here, the urban settlements scattered throughout the expansive desert along with their local and seasonal Sūqs played a pivotal role in positioning a Pre-Islamic Arab in-between everyday challenges and some latent opportunities (sections 5.3.1-5.3.5 and 5.5). Moreover, the desert acted as a reservoir of cultural memories, reminding one of departed lovers, deceased kinsmen, prideful events, morals, customs, and tribal obligations (section 5.4.2). In turn, the Pre-Islamic

understanding of *fadaā*, as manifest through the experiences and poetics of desert-life, allowed the trade route and its Sūqs to become a passageway, or *tareeq*, that made room not only for the act of trading but most importantly for the dispersal and reordering of some particularly Arabian meanings relating to morality, tribalism and superstitious/mythic beliefs. Islamic Sūqs seem to have inherited such poetic qualities, granting the Islamic city a distinct flair of ‘Arab-ness’ through its many in-between spaces, both physical and spiritual (Earth and Sky); its nostalgic reinterpretation of Quranic paradise, a Muslim’s primordial home; and its tangled passageways that segregate the city’s different quarters and simulate earlier tribal zones (section 6.2.2 and 6.5). Here, the meaning of the *fadaā/tareeq* is displaced in relation to 1) a new religious position and 2) new territorial expansions. Through these two contingencies, the *fadaā* is removed from its previous encroachment to mundane events towards the wider realm of celestial orders (Sky) and its supreme deity, *Allah*. Consequently, the meaning of the *tareeq* acquired heightened spiritual levels, granting Sūqs the ability to symbolize not only a physical urban hierarchy of places but a spiritual ablution path away from the tarnishes of mundane life towards ‘what eyes have not seen’ (section 6.5.1). This idea of salvation played a further role in shaping Post-Islamic Arabia’s understanding of Sūq-ness, granting traditional Sūqs today their flair of ‘authenticity and identity’ (section 7.6.2.2). Yet, the idea of a *fadaā* in Post-Islamic Arabia seems to have been rid of many of its heavenly references, furnishing it instead with a plethora of ideological symbols relating to the region’s political, religious and economic struggles (section 7.5). This is traceable in much of the region’s poetics, which consider the Sūq as a symbol of practical knowledge, identity, pride and heritage, as discussed through the works of Mahfouz, Toukan, Darwish and Qabbani for instance (section 7.5). Through these readings, the traditional Sūq, as opposed to emerging urban centres, acquires a strong mythic outreach that not only nourishes an Arab’s exigency on nostalgia and nostalgic thinking but also presents the Post-Islamic *fadaā* as a space of struggles in-between an imagined glorious past and the challenges of modern-day life. This is also implied through the case studies of Post-Islamic Arabia,

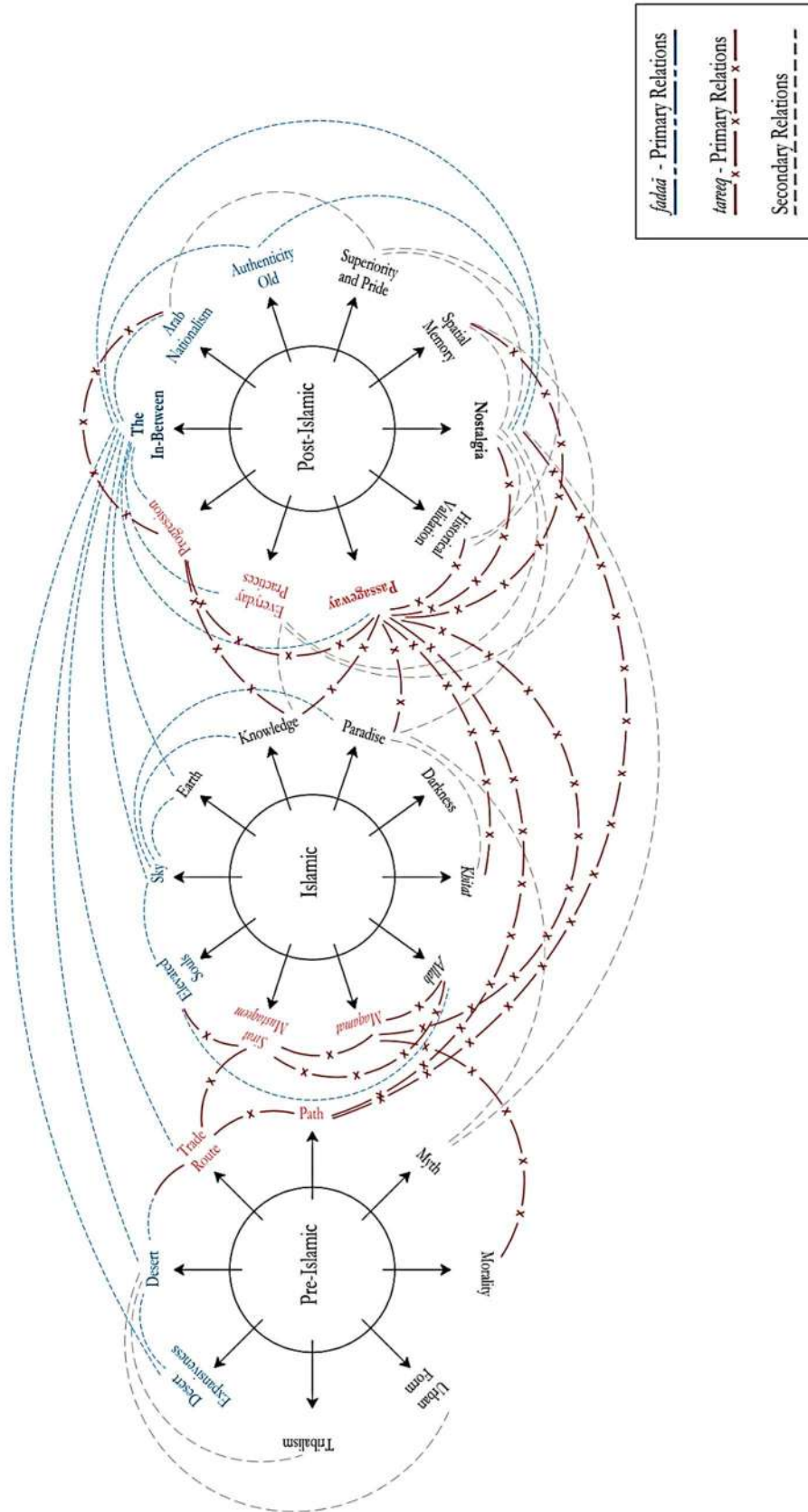
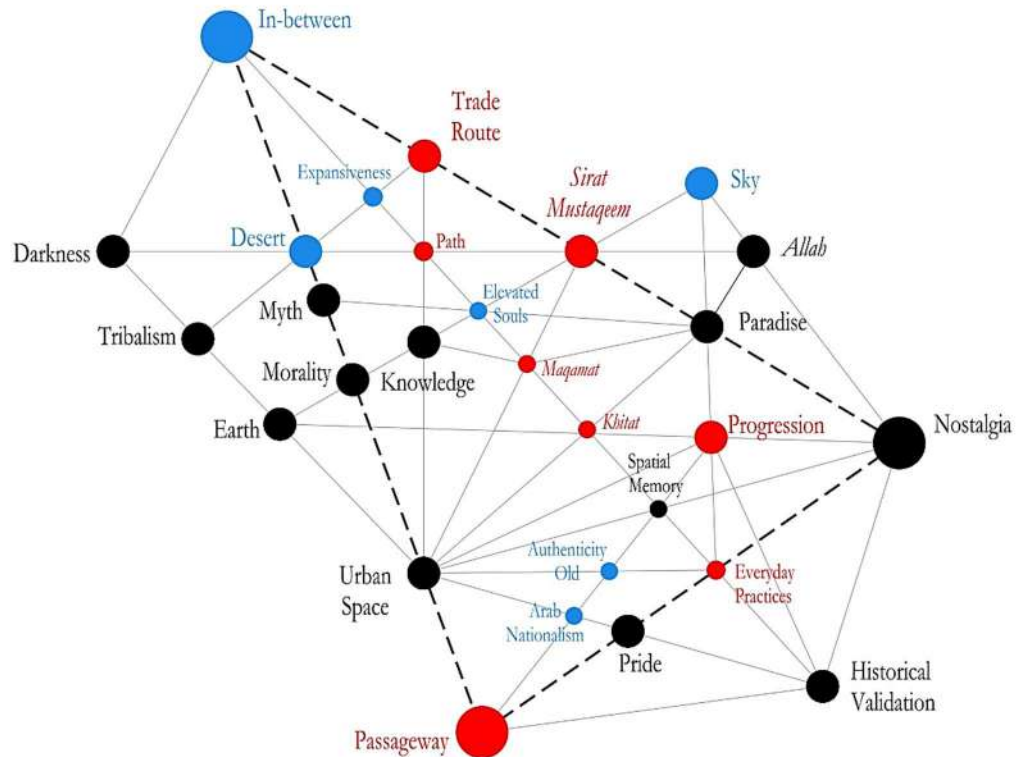


Figure 122 - Diagram showing preliminary connections between the different themes identified through the analysis of Pre-Islamic, Islamic and Post-Islamic Arabia. By author.

Figure 123 - Idea Networking Diagram showing the synthesis between the different themes and major sub-themes identified in the three historical interpretations. Blue Dots symbolize the trajectory of the *fadaā* and red dots trace that of the *tareeq*. Black dots symbolize all of the other themes identified in chapters 5-7. Size of the dots symbolize the amount of connections created by each theme/sub-theme on the FCD. By author.



particularly that of Dubai, where the seemingly pressing need for joining the ‘Western procession’ led not only to the importation of foreign urban references but also to the destruction of old sites (section 7.3.3). This again points to a state of in-between-ness that not only affected the conceptualization of the Post-Islamic Arabian *fadaā*, as a space of struggles, but also transformed the meaning of the *tareeq* from a path of righteousness to a passageway of freedom (section 7.6.1) or to a ‘walk with history’ (section 7.6.2.2). Moreover, the interviews pointed to the presence of some dialectic tensions in an Arab’s current understanding of tradition and modernity, particularly through most of the interviewees’ preference of traditional Sūqs despite their unanimous agreement that modern malls are more functional, hygienic and better equipped for modern-day needs (section 7.6.2.2). This finding suggests that for Post-Islamic Arabia the imagined social relevance of traditional Sūqs transcends the need for functionality, granting the region with one possible route for rejuvenating its socio-urban identity and for validating its existence through history.

In light of the above, the IN diagram (Fig. 123) and its interpretations, which will be discussed in sections 8.4.3-8.4.5, start with the assumption that In-between, Nostalgia and Passageway are the three main themes delineating the boundaries of the Sūq's hermeneutic identity and that all other themes present themselves as nodal points channelling the space's socio-urban discourse towards its different historical possibilities. By doing so, the IN diagram proposes a graphic synthesis of the research's discussions and findings, concentrating on those evidences already discussed in chapters 4-7. While not negating the possibility of other interpretations, the narratives that are discussed in the following sections focus on those Sūq-related meanings that can assist the research in answering its main questions and in fulfilling its objectives.

8.4.1 On Questions (a): Pre-Knowledge of the Arabian Sūq

The research started with an in-depth analysis of existing literature on Arabian Sūqs, concluding that an Arabian Sūq is more than a mere trading space, manifesting itself as a cultural silo that safeguards some meanings that are directly related to an Arab's social, political and religious perception of the world (sections 4.4-4.6). The aim of the review, then, was to answer question (a) and to fulfil objective (1) of this research (section 1.6), both of which are concerned with uncovering some of the prejudices that seem to encircle our knowledge of Arabian Sūqs today. So, the literature review revealed that the distance separating the current appearance of an Arab city's built-environment from its everyday social context points to some gaps in our knowledge of the region's urban development. These gaps, discussed through the works of Lapidus, Marçais, Bianca, Alsayyad and Rabbat (sections 1.2 and 4.3-4.6), seem to emanate from these studies' limited historical timeframe and methodologies. First, the emphasis on the Sūq's purported Islamic origin rendered many of these studies unable to locate the Sūq's historical relevance beyond the limits of a particular Islamic situation. Second, the emphasis on the space's physical development alone fell short in exploring its poetic resonance and, in turn, the displacement of its embodied meanings at different historical situations (section 4.2). Following

Dalibor Vesely's argument that "displacement raises a question of appropriateness that has always been integral to architectural thinking, with its emphasis on the tangibility of experience and knowledge," the literature review argued that some current methods and their generalized findings are not wholly appropriate for studying the Arabian Sūq phenomenon, advancing the need for a different model of interpretation (sections 2.3 and 4.6) that can demonstrate how,

*symbolic and instrumental representation stand very often in conflict. While the former is reconciliatory and serves as a vehicle of participatory understanding and all-encompassing meaning, the latter is aggressive and serves as an instrument of autonomy, domination and control.*⁷¹²

To explore the foundations of such conflict, the research did not rely on urban case studies alone but made use of Pre-Islamic poetry, Islamic philosophy, Sufist contemplations as well as Post-Islamic literature, interviews and media productions, as primary sources. The use of poetry here responds to Gadamer's interpretive approach and answers readily to some resurging theoretical arguments, such as those of Bachelard, Deleuze and Guattari, who believe that the power of poetic language resides in its ability to come in-touch with the things themselves, introducing "a relation to things that is outside the relation governed by normal language, but not outside experience."⁷¹³ Arab poet Adonis advances a similar stance, arguing for the still unexplored potential of Arabic poetry and its importance in revealing the dialectic tensions inherent in the Arabian thinking model as a whole.⁷¹⁴ He notes that,

*the problematic of poetic modernity in Arab society goes beyond poetry in the narrow sense and is indicative of a general cultural crisis, which is in some sense a crisis of identity. This is linked both to an internal power struggle which has many different aspects and operates on various levels, and to an external conflict against foreign powers.*⁷¹⁵

⁷¹² Vesely, *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation*, 356.

⁷¹³ Gregg Lamber, *Who's Afraid of Deleuze and Guattari?* (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2006), 50.

⁷¹⁴ Adonis, *An Introduction to Arab Poetics*, 70.

⁷¹⁵ Ibid.

Accordingly, the research's methodology and textual evidences (poetry, literature, puppet show and interviews) were sought as tools for better understanding the socio-urban relevance of the Arabian Sūq phenomenon.

8.4.2 On Question (b): The Research's Theoretical Paradigm

The gaps in knowledge identified through the literature review were among the many reasons that necessitated the search for an alternative theoretical paradigm to examine the Sūq phenomenon. Gadamer's hermeneutic philosophy, discussed in chapter 2, along with his interpretive tools of 'Hermeneutic Circle' and 'Fusion of Horizons' (section 3.2.3), allowed the research to investigate the socio-urban development of the Sūq from different historical perspectives using a variety of methods and evidence types. For, Gadamer, as he explains in "The Artwork in Word and Image" (1992), intends to counterpoise the visual and verbal worlds of art to reveal what "word and image, the art of the word and all the visual arts, share in a common endeavour, and how within this commonality, the role is determined that the one or the other will play in forming our culture."⁷¹⁶ Here, Gadamer argues that both forms of art not only possess divergent presentational tools but they are also representatives of different forms of historical truths, relating to the pervasiveness of language, modes of production and cultural accessibility.⁷¹⁷ By levelling these two realms—word and image—Gadamer re-appropriates Kant's ideas on imaginative intuition, or '*cognitio imaginativa*,' as the basis for understanding aesthetic experience.⁷¹⁸ Gadamer grounds this imaginative intuition not on perception alone but also on the historical, sensory and spiritual interpretations that affect the object's mental representation.⁷¹⁹ This possibly explains why Gadamer repeatedly emphasizes

⁷¹⁶ Hans Georg Gadamer, "The Artwork in Word and Image," in *The Gadamer Reader: A Bouquet of the Later Writings*, edited by Richard E. Palmer (Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2007), 195.

⁷¹⁷ Gadamer, "The Artwork in Word and Image," 199-200

⁷¹⁸ Alberto J.L. Carillo Canan, "Gadamer's Leveling of the Visual and the Verbal, and the Experience of Art," in *The Visible and the Invisible in the Interplay between Philosophy, Literature and Reality*, edited by Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka (Dordrecht: Springer Science + Business Media, 2002), 201.

⁷¹⁹ Canan, "Gadamer's Leveling of the Visual and the Verbal, and the Experience of Art," 200.

that “poetry is based upon the intuition of the spiritual,” justifying its ‘priority’ above all other forms of art.⁷²⁰ The research made use of this theoretical argument to justify its search, analysis and interpretation of poetic evidences against urban/architectural case studies.

The research also relied on Gadamer’s arguments in “The Relevance of the Beautiful,” to examine, understand and interpret the different historical and social effects that encircled the Sūq’s physical urban development over time.⁷²¹ Here, Gadamer argues that the development of artistic expressions—including poetry and architecture—represents endless dialectic tensions, which emerge when “a new claim to truth sets itself up against the tradition that continues to express itself through poetic invention or in the language of art.”⁷²² He further claims that the evolution of artistic styles is more than a break with tradition, signalling the presence of some social and ideological conflicts that can no longer be expressed nor understood in conventional form. Accordingly, the legitimacy of art for Gadamer is based on its symbolic capacity to integrate community, society, religion and politics on the one hand and the innovative spirit of artists on the other.⁷²³ Still, Gadamer believes that architecture poses a further set of challenges due to its vital obligation to functionality, as he explains in “The Ontological Foundation of the Occasional and the Decorative.”⁷²⁴ For, this reason, Gadamer emphasizes the importance of cross-examining the physical morphology of architectural forms against their mental implications on an individual’s as much as society’s understanding of history and tradition, arguing,

*long before we understand ourselves through the process of self-examination, we understand ourselves in a self-evident way in the family, society and the state in which we live . . . the prejudices of the individual, far more than his judgments, constitute the historical reality of his being.*⁷²⁵

⁷²⁰ Canan, “Gadamer’s Leveling of the Visual and the Verbal, and the Experience of Art,” 200.

⁷²¹ Hans Georg Gadamer, “The Relevance of the Beautiful,” in *The Relevance of the Beautiful and Other Essays*, edited by Robert Bernasconi, translated by Nicholas Walker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

⁷²² Gadamer, “The Relevance of the Beautiful,” 1.

⁷²³ Ibid., 10.

⁷²⁴ Gadamer, “The Ontological Foundation of the Occasional and the Decorative,” 128.

⁷²⁵ Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 278.

The research adopted this argument and applied it to the different historical parts for purposes of examining how social dialogue permits imagination to build and project images from one source to another, endorsing a form of ‘*sensus communis*,’ or practically shared knowledge. This examination was based on three important variables: historical situatedness, linguistic negotiations and lived experience. Tracing the development of these three variables in an Arabian Sūq’s urban and social relations, the research attempted to answer question (b), examining through Gadamer’s hermeneutics the “common language for the common content of [Arabia’s] self-understanding.”⁷²⁶ In this way, the research’s theoretical paradigm possibly assisted in expanding the horizon of existing literature on the subject, revealing the clusters of meanings that the Sūq’s experience made room for at different historical situations (objective 2).

8.4.3 On Question (c): The Sūq’s Relevance In-Between Space and Time

The IN diagram (Fig. 123) suggests one possible answer to question (c) and by doing so also fulfils research objective (2). For, the IN diagram proposes that the Sūq’s lived experience points beyond itself to the state of in-between-ness orchestrating an Arab’s understanding of the space throughout its three historical stages. As shown in Fig. 121, this idea is manifest through the overarching duality of the *fadaā/tareeq*, which itself has been translated into variable sets of dualities in different historical contexts. First, the analysis of some Pre-Islamic Arabian examples suggested that the idea of Sūq-ness was tied not only to everyday acts of buying and selling but to some religious rituals and practices that transformed a Sūq into an ordering agent. This is deduced from different archaeological clues, such as those found in *Timna* (section 5.3.1), *Mampis* (section 5.3.2) and *Hatra* (section 5.3.3), where temples and markets seem to have a very close relationship. It is also pronounced in the pilgrimage rituals of the ancient trade route and in the poetics that describe its different activities (section 5.5.1). Here, the Sūq events orchestrating the trade route’s procession emerge as religious, political and social

⁷²⁶ John Arthos, *Gadamer's Poetics: A Critique of Modern Aesthetics* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), x.

safety nodes, summoning the variable polarities of survival/death, fear/hope, love/animosity and good/evil (sections 5.4.2 and 5.5.2). For, Pre-Islamic poetry (section 5.4) **highlights** that the Sūq event made room for a multiplicity of lived experiences, like worshipping, talking, fighting, courting and exchanging, hence suggesting that Sūq-ness granted a Pre-Islamic Arab with a world of possibilities that transformed the barren desert into a *fadaā* and the trade route along with its seasonal Sūqs into a revelatory path or *tareeq*. Sections 5.5 and 5.6 explored the mental and physical experiences that the duality of the *fadaā/tareeq* made room for in Pre-Islamic Arabian daily life through a cross-examination of poetry, rituals and archaeological remnants. This examination revealed that the relevance of the Pre-Islamic Sūq's experience transcends the limits of a primitive situation, highlighting the space's poetic capacity in establishing the basis of knowledge, morality and togetherness in Pre-Islamic Arabia (section 5.6).

Second, the research investigated how the Sūq's experience and its embodied meanings have been rehabilitated and displaced during the Islamic era through language, allowing the duality of *fadaā/tareeq* to emerge again as a principal constituent of the Arabian conceptualization of Sūq-ness (sections 6.2-6.4). Yet, the research portrayed that the Islamic interpretation of Sūq-ness no longer sought the desert and the trade route as the basis of Arabian lived experience, replacing these two references with many religiously inspired concepts, like *Jannah*, *Jahannam* and *Sirat Mustaqeem* (Paradise, Hell and Righteousness Path). These ideas seem to have guided the Islamic Sūq's physical and poetic interpretation, as explained through the work of Bianca, Lapidus and von Grunebaum (section 1.2, 4.2 and 4.3). Similar to their findings, the case studies (section 6.3.1-6.3.4) demonstrated that the physical structure of the Islamic city was designed after some political acts of will, which intended the segregation of the city's different professional and ethnic groups to ensure the organization, safety and functionality of the city. Unlike these works, most of which relied on physical evidence alone, the research's range of poetic and literary evidences of the era portrayed that the Islamic Sūq embodies some particular Arabian meanings that have been socially, politically and religiously

negotiated in response to variable situations. By exploring some poetic descriptions, such as those of Baghdad and Damascus (sections 6.4 and 6.5.2), the research revealed how the spiritual interpretations bestowed on Islamic Sūqs were not always unanimous, depending largely on the poet's in-time experience and his/her individual motives (sections 6.4 and 6.5). This idea has also been explored through some of the political conflicts of the era, particularly through the architectural metaphors employed by the Umayyads and the Abbasids (section 6.5.2). It has also been discussed through the Sufist concepts of *tajalli* and *Maqam*, which encouraged contemplation, observation and the careful repositioning of one's in-time lived experiences towards variable acts of divine *tajalli* (section 6.5). Yet, the concept of *tajalli* here seems to suggest an important link to Arabia's Pre-Islamic poetic wisdom, possibly granting Muslim Arabs the means to bridge the gap between some Pre-Islamic references, to embrace Islam's new situational horizon and to anticipate the future by seeking new forms of knowledge and production. The universalism suggested through this interpretation finds its genesis in the process of human progress itself, where the idea of poetic wisdom becomes "not only a product of the mind, but also the logic of the mind's operation by which it acquires knowledge."⁷²⁷

Third, the research investigated the development of the *fadaā/tareeq* duality during the Post-Islamic era through the contemporary concerns of Hussein, Abdou, Adonis and Elsheshtawy (sections 7.2, 7.3.2 and 7.4), who critiqued the region's dependence on Medieval Islamic interpretations (Hussein, Abdou and Adonis) and its reliance on foreign models of development (Elsheshtawy). Even though Post-Islamic Arabia's backwarded urban strategies were traceable in the case studies of Heliopolis, Baghdad and Dubai, the research found that the traditional Arabian Sūq's poetic descriptions also seem to hold many backwarded connotations (sections 7.4-7.6), symbolised in the constant reminiscence of past glories. This was identified in contemporary literature/poetry, Jahin's show and the interviews (sections 7.5 and 7.6), which together implied that the traditional Sūq is symbolic of the region's identity and

⁷²⁷ Fassl, *Sacred Eloquence*, 61.

collective spatial memory. Through these sources, the research demonstrated that the Sūq's poetic capacity today resides in the space's imagined ability to validate Arabian existence through the superimposition of the 'Old' onto present and future situations (section 8.4.4). The interviews (section 7.6.2), particularly those of IA and MA, further suggest that this results in the transformation of the Post-Islamic *fadaā* into a space of struggles and competition, and the traditional Sūq into a *tareeq* of safety, pride and identification (section 7.6.1).⁷²⁸ Another displacement in the Sūq's meaning today was implied in Dubai's social survey (section 7.4), where many respondents believed that Dubai's interpretation of the trade route, exemplified in the case of Sheikh Zayed Road and its iconic buildings (section 7.3.3), led to the limitation of the idea of Sūq-ness to matters of global trade and/or to the sheer display of economic competitiveness (section 7.4.2).⁷²⁹

While Dubai's case study confirms Elsheshtawy's and Davis's arguments regarding Post-Islamic Arabia's backwarded urban strategies (section 7.4), the research still argued that the reprimands of Dubai's development model transcends Critical argumentation, which extracts the meaning of objects or places from their cultural context and positions temporal technological advances in a dialectic relationship between 'new situational possibilities' and 'the conditions of everyday life.'⁷³⁰ For, Dubai's social survey portrayed that the city's perception is not unanimously negative, suggesting that the city's 'imported' urban model succeeded in creating appropriate living experiences. Still, by doing so, Dubai admits itself readily to the same global challenges that are facing many cities today, pointing how "the panorama-city is a 'theoretical' (that is, visual) simulacrum, in short a picture, whose condition of possibility is an oblivion and a misunderstanding of practices."⁷³¹ Also, Dubai's case study—including the visual

⁷²⁸ This idea is implied through the survey responses and in H.H.'s book *My Vision*, whose opening chapter uses the analogy of the lion and gazelle to describe the city's vision of economic growth, as hunt or be hunted.

⁷²⁹ Appendix B (11B.2), entry numbers 122 and 193. This understanding is also suggested in the visual test results of a Focus Group Study, conducted by author and presented at the EURAU 2014 conference, "Composite Cities," in Istanbul. A copy of the visual test results is attached in Appendix 11C. The paper is titled "Dubai: City Branding or Place Making?"

⁷³⁰ Vesely, *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation*, 375.

⁷³¹ De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 93.

test results attached in Appendix 11.C—portray that the city’s embodied meanings cannot be understood away from its everyday practices and perceptions (section 8.3.3), which are found on street level where walkers,

*follow the thicks and thins of an urban ‘text’ that they write without being able to read it. These practitioners make use of spaces that cannot be seen... The paths that correspond in this intertwining, unrecognized poems in which each body is an element signed by many others, elude legibility.*⁷³²

8.4.4 On Question (d): Poetics, Identity and Nostalgia in Arabian Sūqs

The research’s question (d) and objective (3) targeted the exploration of the traditional Arabian Sūq’s poetic capacity. Similar to most studies on Arabic poetry, like those of Dayf and Hussein for instance, the research identified a general sense of nostalgia permeating the region’s poetic expressions at different historical stages.⁷³³ In the particular case of the Sūq, the research findings suggest that these nostalgic expressions point beyond themselves to the bigger idea of ‘*watan*’ or homeland. Pre-Islamic variations of this theme were discussed through the works of Imro’o al-Qays and Tarafa bin al-‘Abd (section 5.5.2), while its Islamic resonances were explored through the works of al-Mutanabbi and Abdul Rahman al-Dakhel (sections 6.4 and 6.5.2). Further variations were evident in the Post-Islamic works of Malaika, Qabbani and Darwish (section 7.5), which described Arabian Sūqs as places of ‘real’ events, struggles, collective memory, diversity and solidarity. The research’s thematic analyses (sections 5.6, 6.6 and 7.7) suggest that the Sūq’s experience has always embodied these meanings through variable symbolic associations, despite historical differences in time or place. By suggesting so, the research claims to have uncovered an important aspect of the Sūq’s poetic resonance (question d) and its relevance to the development of Arabia’s socio-urban life (question c).

For, reviewed contemporary poetry (section 7.5) suggested that Arabian identity depends on the formulation of some shared ‘emotional foundations’ that

⁷³² De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 93.

⁷³³ Dayf, *Tareekh al-adab al-‘Arabi: Al-‘asr al-jahili* (تاريخ الأدب العربي: العصر الجاهلي); Taha Hussein, *Fil-Adab al-Jaheli* (في الشعر الجاهلي), Arabic (Soussa: Dar al-Ma'aref, 1927).

safeguard the basis of together-ness, revealing the presence of a dialectic relationship between the Sūq's current deteriorating appearance and its nostalgic social understanding. The research explored this proposition using a range of evidences, which discussed how the Arabian understanding of together-ness at different historical situations extended the idea of *watan* beyond the physical limitations of geographic places towards some distant socially-constructed sanctities, like the temple or the House of the God (*Kaaba*) in Pre-Islamic Arabia, the mosque in Islamic Arabia and the Damascene house in Post-Islamic Arabia. The construction of these imaginary sanctities allowed one to intelligibly position him/herself in a world of others, whose myths, poetry, stories and curiosities established a *fadaā* of possibilities that probably defined, structured and regulated his/her understanding of *tareeq*. Yet, the nature and direction of this *tareeq* was never devoid of idiosyncrasies, as falsely presupposed, but its meaning and spatial imageries have been constantly rehabilitated through a shared linguistic horizon that allowed individual lived experiences to reconstruct past memories and negotiate their current significance as means for defining the parameters of the latent world. This linguistic horizon, as discussed through Arabia's various 'eminent texts' (sections 5.4, 6.4 and 7.3), manifests itself as a "structure that holds together the individual elements of a particular situation."⁷³⁴

The effects of such linguistic horizon on the Sūq's current meaning have been examined using poetry, Jahin's show and the interviews (sections 7.4-7.6), which together portrayed that the traditional Sūq presents Post-Islamic Arabia with a form of urban text that is meaningful on collective and individual levels. On the one hand, this text is physically inscribed in the form of gates, walls, alleyways, touching balconies, mosques, coffee shops and houses, constituting together the prototypical image of an Arabian Sūq, whose very essence of Sūq-ness is activated through participation in everyday events as well as festive rituals. On the other hand, this activation is constantly coloured by the position, intentions and motives of individual Sūq-goers, whose interpretation of the Sūq's urban text reflects their differing historical situations, 'religious' perspectives and personal

⁷³⁴ Vesely, *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation*, 385.

memories. Accordingly, the research proposed that the legibility of the Sūq's architectural text transcends its syntactical deployment in space, alluding not only to a system of religious hierarchies alone, as claimed by Bianca, Lapidus and Marçais for instance, but also to a socially-articulated series of urban stations, where trading seems to recede to an ancillary value. So, the research suggested that the traditional Arabian Sūq's poetic capacity today is hinged on its ability to provide Arabs with a form of collective spatial memory, or a 'locus' to use Rossi's term, that not only associates historical objects, places and ideas alone but can possibly contribute to future development, where,

*the union between the past and the future exists in the very idea of the city that it flows through in the same way that memory flows through the life of a person; and always, in order to be realized, this idea must not only shape but be shaped by reality.*⁷³⁵

8.4.5 On Questions (c) and (d): The Sūq as a Passageway

The research discussed how the Sūq sustained the Arabs' livelihood not only through trade but most importantly through exchanging ideas, negotiating socio-cultural norms and redefining some socially-shared meanings. Through the reviewed poetry, novels, illuminated manuscripts, puppet show and interviews, the Sūq appears as a passageway, whose experiences, rituals and embodied meanings allowed an Arab to be constantly in-touch with the 'things in themselves.'⁷³⁶ This idea was firstly explored through the ritualistic activities of Pre-Islamic Arabian Sūqs, like those of *Okaz* (section 5.6); and through the archaeological findings at Saba, Hatra and Petra (section 5.4). These evidences displayed a variety of architectural expressions, pointing to the cultural diversity of Arabia's Pre-Islamic towns that laid along the ancient trade path. The remnants of Saba (section 5.3.1), for example, revealed an established political/theological tradition revolving around the worship of the Moon God, as much as they hinted at some particular urban practices, whose building patterns and architectural structures might have possibly influenced later Islamic styles. Further evidence of

⁷³⁵ Rossi, *The Architecture of the City*, 131.

⁷³⁶ Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 267.

such influence was found in the remnants of *Hatra* and *Qaryat al-Fau*, both of which show varying degrees of Roman and Parthian infiltrations (sections 5.3.3 and 5.3.4). *Petraean* architecture also revealed a highly pluralistic religious cum social structures, reinforcing its role as a cosmopolitan centre and a pilgrimage hub at the heart of the caravan route. This plurality is evident in the seemingly clashing sources of architectural decorations, such as the ancient Egyptian obelisks or the elephant heads that resemble the capital reliefs of ancient Buddhist temples (section 5.4.2). The presence of such motifs speaks not only of an amalgam of architectural representations, but also suggests one of the earliest capitalist models in the region, whose characteristics included freedom of architectural expression, systematic urban manipulation, strict taxation policies and religious autonomy. By presenting themselves as symbols of *Petraean* ‘ethos,’ the motifs suggest that architectural ‘goodness’ in Petra was based on gigantic eclectic expressions that not only ensured a constant flow of people, prolonged taxed stays and mercantile activities but possibly also relayed instant images of superiority, which are recurrent themes in Arabian poetry whether Pre-Islamic, Islamic or Post-Islamic. Still, *Petraean* representations seem to also forward a sense of tolerance to religious plurality, which was not exclusive to Petra given that the ancient Sūqs of *Mecca* and *Medina* witnessed similar practices, as understood from poetry, Islamic references and mythic stories (sections 5.3.5 and 5.5.1). Accordingly, it is suggested that this plurality aimed not at promoting the commercial stature of Pre-Islamic towns alone but also sustained their relevance as passageways of mass pilgrimage.

The research explored how the religious rituals orchestrating the caravan route and Sūqs of *Arabia Desertae* played the greatest role in the establishment of many pagan as well as monotheistic urban centres, such as those of *Hatra*, *Kindah* and *Medina*. The research found that much of this plurality seems to have been neglected after the coming of Islam, advancing *Quraish*’s history as the chief representative of Arabian heritage (section 6.2.1). This finding played an important role in developing the research’s scope and questions, necessitating the revision of Arabia’s Pre-Islamic history away from many current Islamic

presuppositions in order to locate some forgotten meanings in the region's political, religious, cultural and socio-urban development. By probing the 'unthinkable' in Islam, the research attempted to portray the importance of social practices in consolidating the Arabian understanding of Sūq-ness, in bridging the gap between what is particularly Arabian as opposed to what is Islamic, and in revealing the difference between the Sūq as an urban prop and Sūq-ness as an Arabian mode of dwelling.⁷³⁷ To do so, the research did not isolate the findings of the historical investigations but looked for possible connections between Pre-Islamic Sūq rituals and their Islamic as well as Post-Islamic counterparts. In the case of Islamic Sūqs, the research portrayed how Quranic prose widened the limited horizon of the Pre-Islamic dweller and allowed language to transcend the environmental harshness of the desert, granting Arabs with new spatial imageries that were based on some Orthodox textual interpretations as well as variable individual contemplations (sections 6.2, 6.3-6.5). This was first described through different Islamic towns, where the franchised urban layout (Mosque + Sūq + Bath) suggests not the presence of a hegemonizing political system alone, but also of some rehabilitation of the *fadaā/tareeq* duality in response to a 'new' religious perspective. An examination of different architectural motifs of the Islamic era (section 6.5) portrayed that such hegemony was constantly counterpoised by the particularity characterising the architectural heritage and cultural orientation of different Islamic towns, confirming that each of them possessed its own socio-cultural idiosyncrasies (section 6.5.1-6.5.2). While this sheds light on the different methods through which the Sūq's experience (re)defined a Muslim Arab's as well as a Muslim non-Arab's understanding of Islam and the world around him/her, little information is available today on the role of these experiences in reinforcing a sense of identity on non-Muslim dwellers. This dearth in information suggests the presence of some further prejudices that position Arab-ness as part of an

⁷³⁷ Mohammed Arkoun, "Rethinking Islam Today," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 588 (2003): 4. Arkoun defines the 'unthinkable' in Islam as, "all the culture and systems of thought related to pagan, polytheistic, *jahili* (pre-Islamic), or modern secularized societies are maintained in the domain of the unthinkable and, consequently, remain unthought in the domain of 'orthodox' Islamic thought or the thinkable."

exclusive religious group, ignoring the strong presence and contribution of many Christian/Jewish Arabian poets/thinkers, such as al-Samawaāl (6th century), Hatem al-Tai (died 605), al-Akhtal (640-708), Georji Zidan (1861-1914) and Naguib Mahfouz (1911-2006). The research indirectly examined the effects of this imaginary exclusivity on the development Sūq's meaning today through the works of Mahfouz (7.5 and 7.6.2), revealing the strong Islamic influences permeating his perception of the Sūq's socio-urban relations, as described in his novels *Khan al-Khalili*, *al-Harafish* and *Bayn al-Qasrein* (sections 4.6, 7.5 and 7.6.2). While these Islamic influences were also traceable through the works of Malaika, Hakki, Hussein and in Jahin's show, the interviews seldom pointed at them, except in MK's (Appendix A.12 - interviewee) descriptions of the religious celebrations in the Sūqs of Nablus or in the other interviewees' accounts that explain the relationship between the mosque and the Sūq's passage (section 7.6.2.2). **Instead, the interviews proposed that the Sūq's experience today seems to encapsulate some dialectic tensions between the space's current physical reality and its historically mediated image, transforming the Sūq's symbolic meaning from an active *tareeq* in a larger contemplative *fadaā* into a nostalgic path that is constantly seeking the past as means for validating the present.**

This idea is also implied through Dubai's case study and social survey (sections 7.3-7.4), which portrayed that political intervention played the greatest role in sculpting the city's urban space and in influencing its socially-shared meanings through variable branding techniques. Still, Dubai's case study also suggested that the city's building logic is tied to the Sūq phenomenon in more than one way. For, Dubai's urban projects, illustrated in Fig. 96-97, suggest that the city's building strategies withdraw their inspiration from the city's heritage as a port market. Yet, many of the social survey responses seem to imply that Dubai's Post-Islamic interpretation of trade extends beyond exchangeable goods to include policies, architecture and people (section 7.4.2). While this coincides with the findings and critiques of Elsheshtawy and Davis, such implication hints at another form of displacement in Arabia's current understanding and experience of Sūq-ness. For, unlike the traditional Sūq, Dubai lacks a clearly defined centre,

whether physical or spiritual, resulting in its constant search for the ‘new’ and ‘extraordinary’ to validate its presence among other cities.⁷³⁸ Even though Dubai intends the simulation of modernity through building and luxury (section 7.3.3), the research findings suggested that the city’s model of development depends not on foreign references alone, as assumed by Davis and Elsheshtawy (section 7.4), but is also probably inspired from earlier examples in Arabian history. Similar to Petra, for example, Dubai is constantly striving to safeguard its revenues through transient urbanism, eclectic architectural expressions and a multicultural social body. Yet, unlike Petra, Dubai’s lived experience lacks a shared mythic outreach, which was vital for the moral, spiritual and creative development of Arabia’s Pre-Islamic and Islamic socio-urban discourses. Accordingly, it is possible to suggest that Dubai fell short in realizing the original meaning of *Sūq*-ness, which is not based on the physical experience of trade alone but also on the creation of a shared mythic passageway that allows an Arab to dwell in-space and participate with-others. This passageway, imagined through Darwish’s poetry, Mahfouz’s novels, Jahin’s show and the interviewees’ stories, sheds light on the *Sūq*’s poetic capacity and its relevance in consolidating the *fadaā/tareeq* duality. By portraying so, the research answered question (d) and fulfilled objectives 4 and 5.

8.5 Conclusion

The chapter presented a synthesis of the research findings, discussing its problem, scope and delimitations. Still, the purpose of this synthesis was twofold: first to present a possible application of Gadamer’s *Fusion of Horizons* and second to answer the research questions, offering an alternative reading of the Arabian *Sūq*’s socio-urban development as suggested through collected evidences and findings. By doing so, the chapter’s Idea Networking diagram and discussions suggested that the socio-urban relevance of the *Sūq* today is hinged on three important themes: In-between-ness, Nostalgia and Passageway. The following chapter will conclude the study, explaining the importance of these findings and summarizing the research’s process in relation to the research’s objectives.

⁷³⁸ Davis, “Sand, Fear and Money in Dubai,” 49-53.

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Chapter Nine

Conclusion and Recommendations Towards a Poetic Understanding of Arabian Space

9.1 Introduction

To conclude the discussions and findings of this study, this chapter starts with a re-iteration of the research's aim, questions and objectives, followed by a brief discussion of the subject and sources. After revisiting the gaps in reviewed literature, the chapter proceeds to an overview of the research's methodology and its application in this research, highlighting the relevance of its findings in relation to the main objectives described in the introduction (section 1.6) and to the reviewed literature (section 1.4). The chapter concludes with a discussion of the possible contributions to knowledge accrued from the research's particular application of the methodology, and a list of recommendations for future research.

9.2 On the Research's Aim, Objectives and Questions

In the Introduction, the researcher set the aim, objectives and questions of the study (section 1.6) based on the findings of a literature review that investigated a range of secondary sources relating to the subject of the Arabian city and some of the available methods today. By doing so, the research identified some gaps in reviewed literature in relation to the following two points:

- 1) Used methods seem insufficient to effectively understand the Sūq phenomenon, owing to their reliance on physical evidence and their marginalization of poetry and/or linguistic exchange as important sources of knowledge of the Arab region (sections 1.2, 1.4 and 4.6).
- 2) The focus on Islamic urban strategies as the starting point of investigation, implying that Pre-Islamic heritage has little influence on the later periods of Arabia's urban development (section 1.2 and 4.6).

So, the aim of the research was to offer an alternative reading of the traditional Arabian Sūq based on the development of the space's physical appearance and its poetic relevance at three distinct historical situations: Pre-Islamic, Islamic and Post-Islamic (section 1.6). The concept of 'relevance' was key to the development of this research (section 1.2), pointing not to the space's instrumental function alone but more importantly to its social role in shaping, sustaining and possibly also displacing the Arabian understanding of Sūq-ness at different historical intervals. For this reason, the research argued that exploring the Sūq's current situation cannot be addressed in isolation from its Pre-Islamic as well as Islamic backgrounds, the study of which must look into the structures and patterns of meaning-making in Arabia at each of these historical instances. This necessitated the collection and analysis of a range of multi-disciplinary evidences, like archaeological reports, urban maps, photographs, Arabic poetry/literature, a puppet show and interviews. By consulting this diverse archive, the research attempted to fulfil the following objectives:

- 1) identifying prejudices in existing literature;
- 2) analysing major themes that characterize Arabia's socio-urban discourse at different historical and geographic situations;
- 3) uncovering the Arabian Sūq's poetic meaning(s) at each situation;
- 4) tracing the development of the Sūq's physical structure in relation to its ritualistic activities; and
- 5) examining the meaning of Sūq-ness in newly emerging Arabian states.

To achieve the above, the research proposed that Gadamer's hermeneutics is a better suited methodology for exploring the historical effects that encircled the development of the Sūq phenomenon. This proposition was supported by a review of some of Gadamer's theories (sections 2.4 and 3.2), discussing how his constructivist approach to interpretation seeks to understand a phenomenon through its interrelated parts, including its in-time appearance, poetic resonance, individual experience and socially-reciprocated meaning. The dialogical interaction of these parts with the interpreter's own historical horizon assisted the study to discover some unforeseen meanings.⁷³⁹

9.3 On the Research's Subject and Sources (Primary and Secondary)

The research investigated the historical development of the Arabian Sūq phenomenon, arguing that its socio-urban meaning extends beyond its purported instrumentality of segregating an Arab city's functions or of facilitating trade. By proposing so, the research intended to investigate the hermeneutic identity of the Sūq by means of cross-examining its physical development over time against contemporaneous texts that describe its different socially-manufactured meanings and rituals—both normal and festive. Analysing a range of multi-disciplinary evidences assisted the research in evaluating some of the currently available studies on Arabian Sūqs (chapter 4), highlighting the 'nature of their authority' and identifying some of their gaps or prejudices.⁷⁴⁰

⁷³⁹ Hans Georg Gadamer, "On the Scope and Function of Hermeneutical Reflection," in *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, by Hans Georg Gadamer, translated and edited by David E. Linge (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 18.

⁷⁴⁰ Said, *Orientalism*, 326.

Responding to some of these gaps and prejudices (sections 1.4 and 4.7), the research sought first a methodological framework that can effectively examine non-Western phenomena in the context of their original cultures. Second, the research attempted to expand the Arabian Sūq's historical horizon beyond its purported Islamic origin, testing the possibility that there could be other readings aside from those presented by Islamic, Orientalist and current revisionist sources, like those of Bianca, Lapidus, Marçais, Alsayyad and Rabbat (sections 1.2, 1.4.1 and 4.3-4.6). By doing so, the research intended to re-question, re-analyse and re-interpret what we already know about the Sūq's urban/architectural appearance in relation to the development of the space's meaning, as revealed through architecture, poetry, literature, travel journals, a puppet show, a social survey and interviews. The diversity of evidence types (section 1.7) allowed the research to discover some 'forgotten' meanings that were missed by some of the aforementioned studies, due to their marginalization of Pre-Islamic precedents as key contributors to the development of the Arabian Sūq phenomenon (section 4.3). By exploring some of these forgotten meanings, the research sought a humanistic interpretation of Arabia's socio-urban relations, one that can re-position both the Arabian and the Islamic within their appropriate temporal and spatial contexts.⁷⁴¹

9.4 On the Research's Theoretical Framework and Methods

The research's design and interpretive approach was based on Gadamer's concepts of the Hermeneutic Circle and Fusion of Horizons (section 3.2.2). The theoretical basis of these two concepts, as explained in chapters 2 and 3, dictated the types of methods that were employed for collecting and analysing evidences (section 3.4 and 3.5). The choice of these methods was also based on their capacity to effectively triangulate qualitative data and also for their adaptability to variable types of evidence. Aside from thick descriptions, narrative analysis and various interviewing techniques, the research made use of Christopher

⁷⁴¹ Mohammed Arkoun, "Islam, Urbanism and Human Existence Today," in *Architecture as Symbol and Self-Identity*, edited by Jonathan G. Katz (Philadelphia: Aga Khan Award for Architecture, 1980), 51-53.

Alexander's 'Idea Networking' as a thematic analysis tactic that helped in establishing many possible connections between what is physically sensed in a Sūq and the meanings that were socially constructed in relation to its in-time experiences (section 3.5.3). By adopting this model, the research applied Gadamer's Hermeneutic Circle not only as an approach of questioning what is known against what emerges through textual interpretations, but most importantly as a perpetual process of validation that allows these interpretations to mediate between the Sūq's socially-constructed meanings at variable historical situations.

Accordingly, it is possible to claim that the research presented one of the many possible applications of Gadamer's concepts of Hermeneutic Circle and Fusion of Horizons, which together offered the research a wider methodological platform to explore and cross-examine Arabia's cultural products, both architectural and textual, in the context of their original historical, geographic and social situations. In other words, they allowed the researcher to be engaged with the development of the Sūq's meaning and its displacement at different historical situations, by means of cross-examining physical evidence—archaeological remnants, urban maps and architectural buildings—against the descriptions of their first-hand users—sculptors, poets, travellers, artists or commoners. This cross-examination uncovered a multiplicity of themes (sections 5.6, 6.6 and 7.7), whose 'fusion' possibly contributed to the emergence of a new reading of the Sūq other than that presented by the Orientalist works of Marçais, Lapidus and von Grunbaum for instance (section 4.3), or by their revisionist versions, exemplified in the works of Bianca, Alsayyad and Rabbat (section 1.2).

9.5 On the Research's Findings in Relation to Objectives

9.5.1 Pre-Knowledge, or the Fore-Structures of Understanding

The literature review in chapter 4 explained how the Arabian Sūq's stereotypical image today was established through different Orientalist and revisionist discourses. While not denying the benefits accrued from many such studies, the review pointed to some prejudices that seem to have influenced these studies' conclusions, which propagate that,

- 1) Arabia's urban strategies are a direct result of Islamic conquests alone, marginalizing the role of Pre-Islamic Arabian towns and their possible contribution to the development of the region's urban character.
- 2) Arabia's socio-urban relations is a mere reflection of medieval Islamic *ethos*, subduing the effects of poetics and historical situatedness in developing the regions' socio-urban practices.

Since these studies seem to reflect the Arab region's situation during the 18th, 19th and early 20th century, the research argued that the generalizations implied in their conclusions are not applicable neither to Arabia's Pre-Islamic nor Post-Islamic periods. For this reason, the research examined the Arabian Sūq's socio-urban development over three different historical eras, using the change in the space's physical appearance and the displacement in its poetic significance as vehicles through which the Sūq's hermeneutic identity is to be gradually uncovered.

Accordingly, the research approached the phenomenon of the Sūq using the term's linguistic significations and modes of employment (section 1.3), hence admitting not only the space's instrumental urban function as a circulation or trading venue but also its allegorical deployment in Arabic literature as a connective pathway, an information channel, a contemplative journey and a socio-political stage (sections 5.4.2, 6.4 and 7.5). This granted the research a wider platform to explore the different structures and patterns of experiences that the Sūq possibly made room for. Accordingly, the research ventured into a series of interpretations that intended to test the following propositions:

- 1) While Islamic Sūqs are urban structures that reflect some prevailing medieval planning strategies, their application in Arabia has direct connection to the memory and experience of the Pre-Islamic trade route. This required an in-depth examination of the urban and architectural innovations in the region prior to the coming of Islam (section 5.3), and an exploration of the meaning of Pre-Islamic Sūq-ness (section 5.4).
- 2) The Islamic town's propagated image as a 'franchised' prototype resulted in a generalized discourse that subdues the effects of contextuality and social involvement in an Arabian Sūq's experience. Understanding these

effects necessitated in-depth explorations of the space's physical as well as poetic development at different historical situations to identify possible displacements in its socially-constructed meaning.

By identifying the above, the research fulfilled objective (1).

9.5.2 Summary of Chapters' Findings

This section will bring together the findings of chapters 5, 6 and 7 (Fig. 124), highlighting the major themes identified in Arabia's socio-urban discourse (objective 2); the development of the Sūq's poetic meanings (objective 3) in relation to its physical structure and ritualistic activities (objective 4); as well as the overall changes in the meaning of Sūq-ness in different historical contexts and their effects on Arabia's emerging urban centres (objective 5). These objectives were achieved through a series of interrelated historical investigations, which examined a diverse pool of primary and secondary evidences using various methods (sections 3.4 and 3.5).

The first historical analysis was undertaken in chapter 5, which examined the Pre-Islamic Arabian socio-urban situation using contextual descriptions of urban case studies, narrative analysis of poetic evidence, thematic coding and Idea Networking. These methods were used to achieve a holistic understanding of the era and to triangulate physical (historic), poetic (linguistic) and ritualistic (lived experience) descriptions. By doing so, this examination attempted to:

- 1) Describe the overall historical situation of Pre-Islamic Arabia.
- 2) Delineate the boundaries of the Pre-Islamic experience of space in relation to some natural, mythic, social and political effects.
- 3) Contextually interpret the relationship between different Arabian tribes, their modes of urban settlement and the aesthetic traditions they developed, either through poetry, architecture, sculpture or painting.

Accordingly, the research identified a set of shared themes that seem to have shaped a Pre-Islamic Arab's understanding and experience of Sūq-ness. The chapter's thematic analysis suggested that the trilogy of desert, language and trade route (sections 5.6.1 and 5.6.2) played a big role in the Pre-Islamic Arabian

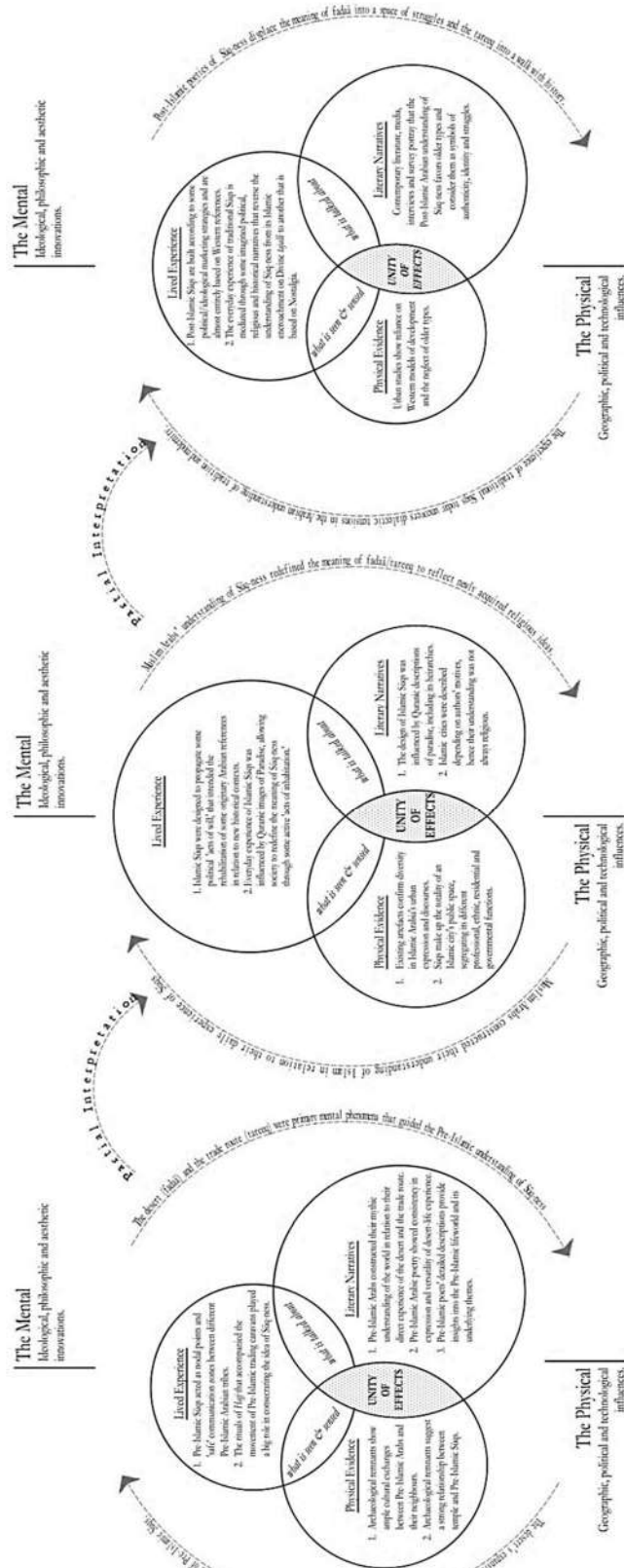


Figure 124 - Compiled triangulation diagrams, summarizing the findings of each historical period. By author.

lifeworld. By studying several case studies that exemplify the diversity of Pre-Islamic urban settlements and then cross-examining them against some of the era's most renowned poetic expressions, the research found that:

- 1) Pre-Islamic Arabian Sūqs, understood as both ritualistic events and trade journeys, were integral constituents of Arabia's overall socio-urban construct and key players in the formulation of the region's cultural, mythic, ideological and political development. This is suggested by both physical and poetic evidence (sections 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5).
- 2) Poetic evidences pointed to Arabic language as a unifying factor, allowing the transformation of the Sūq's trade journey into a plethora of shared myths and ritualistic events (section 5.4.2). This was also suggested through the case studies, where archaeological artefacts revealed some of Pre-Islamic Arabia's binding *ethos* and identified many shared themes in the era's socio-urban discourse (sections 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6).
- 3) The lived experience of Pre-Islamic Arabian Sūqs was influenced by the duality of *fadaā* and *tareeq*, granting an Arab the means to dwell poetically within the extent—let alone challenges—of his/her natural environment. The rituals of the ancient trade route consolidated such understanding, granting Pre-Islamic Arabian tribes some safe means for dwelling collectively in space (section 5.6).

The relevance of these findings was re-examined in chapter 6 through an investigation of Islamic Sūqs, the study of which intended to test whether these two overarching themes—*fadaā/tareeq*—were still effective and how did their understanding change, if any, as a result of the 'new' Islamic situation. Again, contextual descriptions, narrative analysis and thematic coding were deployed to cross-examine physical and literary evidences and to identify the effects of the Islamic situation on Arabia's urban strategies, the linguistic spatial imageries it developed and its engendered lived experiences. Given the abundance of sources available on this era, the scope here expanded to include the examination of maps, illuminated manuscripts and architectural fragments against Quranic text, poetry, travel journals, philosophical treatises and Sufist interpretations (sections 6.3, 6.4

and 6.5). By doing so, this stage also attempted to address objectives no. 2, 3 and 4, proposing possible links to the Pre-Islamic Arabian *fadaā/tareeq* duality. Still, the chapter suggested that these links were not established through mere acts of transmission or conservation but through some active rehabilitation of the Sūq's Pre-Islamic symbolic meaning in relation to a 'newly' acquired religious position (section 6.2). The findings of this chapter propose that,

- 1) The urban planning of Islamic cities was based on some political acts of will, which in themselves were responses to contemporaneous social, economic, military and technological needs, as shown through the case studies of Baghdad and *al-Qahira* (section 6.3.2 and 6.3.4). The research focused on those towns that were and still are part of the Arab region, during the rule of the Umayyads, Abbasids or Fatimids (section 6.3).
- 2) Arabic language played an important role in mediating between the Pre-Islamic Arabian understanding of Sūq-ness and its Islamic counterpart by opening up the Arabian *fadaā* to new spatial imageries, like the Quranic concepts of *Jannah*, *Sirat Mustaqeem* and *Jahannam* (section 6.2.2).
- 3) The religious interpretation of Islamic Sūqs as a spiritual *tareeq* was socially manufactured, reflecting not only some prevailing Orthodox textual interpretations alone (section 6.2), but also some sectarian /political struggles that characterized Arabia's Islamic era, as implied from the region's different architectural decoration techniques and the Sufist concepts of *tajalli* and *maqam* (sections 6.5.1 and 6.5.2).

In chapter 7, these findings were re-examined to test whether or not the *fadaā/tareeq* duality is still present in Post-Islamic Arabia's socio-urban discourse. By studying the metamorphosis of the Sūq's poetic portrayal in literature and the puppet show, it was suggested that the displacement of the space's meaning today is influenced by:

- 1) Early and mid-20th century reformist discourses that intended the reinterpretation of Islam in line with modern-day needs, as understood from the works of Hussein, Abdou and Nasser's Socialist reformations (section 7.2).

- 2) Western models of urban development and foreign architects, who were hired by Post-Islamic rulers to revamp the identity of Arab cities, as discussed through the examples of Heliopolis, Greater Baghdad and Dubai (section 7.3.1-7.3.3).

The development of the Sūq phenomenon at this stage was examined through the triangulation of physical evidence—urban maps and photographs—as well as through literary narratives—contemporary poetry, novels, a social survey, a puppet show and interviews. The chapter made use of two interviewing techniques, a social survey and in-depth interviews, to identify the different discourses at play in the experience of modern as well as traditional Arabian thoroughfare streets. While contextual descriptions of some of the era’s urban projects portrayed tangible aspects of Western influences in terms of planning strategies and architectural appearance, poetic evidences and the puppet show showed evident nostalgic impulses (section 7.5 and 7.6.1) that seem to favour older building types. The interviews also showed some nostalgic inclinations, yet the participants’ narratives suggested the presence of some dialectic tensions in the traditional Sūq’s current experience (section 7.6.2.2). The chapter’s thematic analysis concluded that,

- 1) The urban development of emerging Post-Islamic Arab centres, like Dubai, suggests a backwarded model of development, confirming Davis’s and Elsheshtawy’s arguments (section 7.2 and 7.4).⁷⁴² Since these strategies are politically driven, it was found that their intent is to maximize the cities’ share of global revenues, instating the Sūq’s instrumental understanding instead of evoking its deeper poetic meaning.
- 2) The meaning of a traditional Sūq today is still socially negotiated, yet not through religious interpretations but through daily experience and memory. The thematic analysis identified some further displacements to the original meaning of the *fadaā/tareeq* duality (sections 7.7.2), where

⁷⁴² As noted in footnote 555, the idea backwarded-ness here refers to Leon Trotsky’s theory of ‘combined and uneven development.’

Sūq-ness today seems to represent a passageway for freedom, offering Arabs the means for historical validation and communal identification. Through these findings the chapter attempted to address objectives 2, 3, 4 and 5, suggesting the persistence of the *fadaā/tareeq* duality in Post-Islamic Arabia's socio-urban discourse, yet this time not through active acts of rehabilitation but through the imposition of some past ideals onto an incommensurate present situation (section 7.7.2).

To achieve the research's objectives and to answer its questions, chapter 8 synthesized the findings of chapters 4-7, presenting one possible application of Gadamer's 'Fusion of Horizons.' This synthesis was accomplished not only through the juxtaposition of the three different historical horizons alone but also by cross-examining them against the presuppositions of earlier studies. Identifying Nostalgia, Passageway and In-between as the most recurrent themes in the Sūq's socio-urban story (section 8.4), chapter 8 concluded that the traditional Arabian Sūq grants the region different possibilities of dwelling in space, given its rootedness in Arabian culture and its ability to gather, organize and disseminate a plethora of embodied meanings and shared memories that seem to be intrinsic for the mythic development of Arabian communities. Similar to some of the reformist calls of the early 20th century (section 7.2), the research proposes then that the careful rehabilitation of the Sūq's socio-urban model today can offer a multiplicity of environmentally, culturally and socially-sensitive narratives for the region. This model would possibly allow Arab cities to revamp their urban identity, by means of re-questioning their past ideals and integrating them within a contemporary framework that acknowledges the aspirations and needs of a new global and technological situation.

9.6 On the Research's Findings in Relation to Existing Literature

Using Gadamer's hermeneutics, the development of the Arabian Sūq's meaning was examined through three distinct historical stages. The investigation was initiated with an in-depth review of existing literature on the subject of Arab cities (Chapter 4), uncovering some prejudices and gaps in knowledge that seem

to be affecting our current understanding of the Sūq phenomenon. Having identified these prejudices, the research ventured into a series of historical interpretations, starting with the Sūq's Pre-Islamic situation in Chapter 5, followed by an examination of its Islamic transformation in Chapter 6 and ending with an analysis of its meaningfulness in Post-Islamic Arabian everyday life in Chapter 7. Through a synthesis of the findings of these three historical periods (Chapter 8), the research proposes that the development of the idea of Sūq-ness in Arabia seems to be tied to three themes: In-between, Nostalgia and Passageway (section 8.4). Sections 8.4.3-8.4.5 discussed the development of these themes at each historical situation, portraying how the meanings adhered to each of these themes changed in light of the historical and geo-political context they refer to. These changes are summarized in the following, relating them to the arguments and findings of previously reviewed literature (sections 1.2, 1.4, 4.3-4.6).

While some historians, such as Hoyland, Peters, Ali, Zidan and al-Afghany (chapter 5), examined and described the different patterns of settlement, survival and trading in Pre-Islamic Arabia, few of them explored the poetic relevance of Pre-Islamic Sūqs. The research claims to have contributed to these studies by highlighting a missed aspect of Pre-Islamic communality, which was safeguarded by trade, shared mythic beliefs and religious obligations. This interpretation was implied by some archaeological evidences and historical descriptions (sections 5.3.1 and 5.3.2). Pre-Islamic poetry expands this idea, describing how the desert, the ancient trade route and seasonal Sūqs consolidated a Pre-Islamic Arab's understanding of communality by acting as safety nodes that connect different towns through trading protocols, pilgrimage rituals and sacred truces (section 5.2). Through an in-depth analysis of these evidences (both physical and textual), the research suggested that the *fadaā/tareeq* duality emerges as an important constituent of Pre-Islamic Sūq-ness (section 5.7). Here, the research discussed how the Pre-Islamic Arabian perspective allocated greater importance on one's relationship with the invisible—God(s), spirits or omens, pointing to the *tareeq* as the most significant ground plane object, something that was hard to see in the shifting chaos of the desert's expansive *fadaā*, but

imaginatively constructed through the timely recurrence of seasonal Sūqs. In this way, the very understanding of survival for a Pre-Islamic Arab seems to have depended on not losing the *tareeq*, hence adding to the value of the *fadaā* through which the *tareeq* would be enriched, expanded and given further meanings (sections 5.4.1 and 5.4.2). Tracking the possible effects of this duality on the Sūq's subsequent socio-urban development, Chapter 6 investigated the Islamic city's physical development and the different influences (religious and political) that seem to have affected its Sūqs' perception and experience. Here, the research discussed how Quranic prose played a great role in domesticating many of Arabia's Pre-Islamic symbols, ushering Muslim Arabs to a larger *fadaā* of urban possibilities. This domestication also influenced the development of the Islamic Sūq's *tareeq*, turning it into a series of urban and spiritual hierarchies through the improvisation of variable architectural structures that were not only symbolic of Islam but also contributed to a Muslim's application of his/her understanding of Islam. For, Quranic metaphors, particularly those related to *Jannah* and *Sirat Mustaqeem* (section 6.2.2), led to the transformation of the Sūq's symbolic meaning from a station of safety to a salvation path, allowing a Muslim Arab to rehabilitate the original understanding of the *fadaā/tareeq* in line with new possibilities of religious living.

While many Orientalist studies, such as those of Marçais, Grunebaum and Bianca (sections 4.3-4.6), identified the importance of these Quranic metaphors on the planning of the medieval Islamic town, none of them attempted to explain the poetic development of these metaphors before and after the coming of Islam. For this reason, the research examined the current development of the *fadaā/tareeq* duality, discovering that the traditional Sūq's meaning today seems to embody more political than religious symbols (section 7.5), hence decreasing the Arabian *fadaā*'s spiritual outreach. While political infiltrations seem to have largely influenced the experience and perception of Islamic Sūqs too (sections 6.4 and 6.5.2), the research found that currently the Sūq's symbolic associations do not seek Quranic imagery to support the space's socio-urban relevance but reaches out to some of the region's past glories, both real and manufactured, as

means to resolve its current political struggles. The Sūq seems to play an important role in this projection process, acting as a two-way mirror that reflects through its medieval buildings the Islamic city's past political and architectural achievements; and through its daily lived experience the realities and challenges of modern-day life. This interpretation is based on a variety of textual evidences, including poetry, literature, a puppet show and interviews, which together suggest that the Arabian *fadaā* today symbolizes a space of struggles and the *tareeq* a nostalgic 'walk with history.'⁷⁴³ This reading sheds new light on some current critical concerns, particularly those of Davis and Elsheshtawy who see newly emerging Arab centres as 'backwarded' models of urban development (section 7.4);⁷⁴⁴ as well as those of Arkoun and Adonis who believe that the Islamic interpretation of the region's cultural products intend "the continual actualization of the past."⁷⁴⁵ For, the research discovered that such backwarded-ness is not only symbolic of some religious, technological or political struggles, as suggested by Elsheshtawy, Adonis or Arkoun, but also seems to represent a dialectic tension in the region's understanding of tradition and modernity. On the one hand, Post-Islamic poetics, the interviews and Dubai's social survey suggest that the Arabian understanding of Sūq-ness today seems to be caught between the instrumentality dominating the region's modes of urban development and the nostalgia characterizing most Arabic poetry **about** Sūqs (section 8.3.3). On the other hand, the research found that the Sūq's lived experiences and shared memories seem to transcend the region's apparent backwarded-ness, owing to some poetic views, like those of Darwish, Ibrahim, Malaika, Jahin's show and interview responses of IA and MA, that see the Sūq as an emancipatory passageway, or 'path of Arabian freedom.'

⁷⁴³ Appendix 11A.4, Interview Transcription (03) – MA, section 10:4.

⁷⁴⁴ As noted in footnote 555, the idea backwarded-ness here refers to Leon Trotsky's theory of 'combined and uneven development.'

⁷⁴⁵ Adonis, *An Introduction to Arab Poetics*, 76.

9.7 Research's Contribution to Knowledge

The research presented a phenomenological hermeneutic reading of the Arabian Sūq's story during three historical periods—Pre-Islamic, Islamic and Post-Islamic—bringing forth some missed aspects of its relevance in relation to the region's social, cultural and urban development. In contrast to some available studies that examine the Sūq's formalistic urban typology and its economic function alone, the research looked for some particular patterns and structures of Arabian experience that culminated in the development of the Sūq's social meaning. By doing so, the research pointed to a hitherto forgotten aspect of Arabian communality, where the Sūq's lived experience played an imperative role in instating social norms, mediating between the region's diverse cultural traditions and preserving its poetic memories. For this reason, the research claims to have contributed to existing knowledge with regards to:

9.7.1 The Subject and Its Historical Timeframe

Most available studies on Arab cities seldom focus on the socio-urban discourses that a Sūq makes room for, favouring instead the study of the different architectural forms and urban functions that are believed to have activated the Sūq's social value (sections 4.3-4.7). Contrastingly, the research opted to reverse such understanding, advancing the possibility that the Sūq is both a 'locale and journey' that made room for building, dwelling, poetry and participation.⁷⁴⁶ Examining this possibility required the consultation of various evidence types, which have been analysed, interpreted and re-organized in relation to the different historical contexts they adhere to. Chief among these historical contexts is the Pre-Islamic era, a period often subdued by historians/theoreticians owing to some prevailing Islamic biases that consider it a time of *Jahiliyyah* or ignorance (section 4.3) and to some other Orientalist prejudices that saw little in Pre-Islamic Arabian history beyond a primitive nomadic situation (section 5.2). Chapter 5 questioned many such presuppositions, presenting detailed accounts of various

⁷⁴⁶ Martin Heidegger, "Building, Dwelling, Thinking," in *Basic Writings*, by Martin Heidegger, edited by David Farrell Krell, 343-363 (New York: Harper Collins, 1993).

urban case studies (section 5.3), poetic descriptions (section 5.4) and ritualistic practices (sections 5.2 and 5.5), which revealed that Arabia's socio-urban history is not necessarily based on its Islamic period alone. By doing so, the research aspires to have demonstrated that if we wish to uncover something new about the Arabian region and its cultural products, we need to look beyond its relatively recent Islamic history.

9.7.2 Methodological Application and Employed Evidences

In addition to the above, the research further claims to present one of the few currently available hermeneutic socio-urban studies on the Arab region, using physical and poetic evidences as primary sources. As noted in the introduction (section 1.9), the potential of Gadamer's hermeneutics, while widely used in the fields of nursing, law and art theory, is still unexplored in urban and architectural theory. In the Arab world, this paradigm has yet fewer proponents, with Nader El Bizri's work being the most notable (section 1.4.2). Still, the use of Gadamer's hermeneutics in this research required not only examining Gadamer's theoretical propositions (chapter 2) and the possibility of applying them onto a new context, but also necessitated a review of similar applications, such as those of Paterson, Higgs, Alvesson, Sköldbberg and Mendelson (section 3.2.2). Even though these scholars suggested different variations of Gadamer's Hermeneutic Circle, the historical complexity of the project dictated the need for a larger interpretive model that can incorporate the three historical horizons in question and variable evidence types. Figure 4 (section 1.7) presents a diagrammatic illustration of the proposed model, substantiating the research's claim to an original methodological application that builds upon and possibly also develops some concepts advanced by the aforementioned scholars. These concepts include the idea of a holistic core, partial projections and spiralling interpretations (section 3.2.2).

As for evidence types, the research discussed how Arab poetics remains an unexplored medium today (section 8.3.1), despite the important role it played in the reformative works of Taha Hussein and Mohammed Abdou in the early and mid-20th century (sections 7.2 and 7.3.2). In response to this gap, the research

sought Arab poetics as primary sources of evidence. In addition to poetry and literature, the research made use of other original primary sources designed specifically to fulfil the research's objectives, like Dubai's social survey (section 7.4), puppet show analysis (section 7.6) and in-depth interviews with users of traditional Sūqs (section 7.7).

9.7.3 Research's Findings

The research aspires to have contributed to knowledge by exposing the Sūq's hermeneutic identity away from the confines of its physical shell and its alleged Islamic origin. The research claims to have done so through its discussions and findings, particularly its suggestion that the Arabian understanding of Sūq-ness is historically tied to the *fadaā/tareeq* duality. Figures 120 and 121 present a graphic analysis of the displacements in the meaning of these overarching themes across three historical eras (section 8.4). Based on this diagram, the research offered a holistic interpretation, or Fusion of Horizons, of such displacements in Figure 123, grounding them on the region's repertoire of poetic heritage (poetry, literature and philosophy), cultural products (architecture, sculpture, anecdotes and puppet show) and everyday dialogues (interviews, social survey and travel journals). Through these two diagrams, the research aspires to have widened the horizon of existing knowledge on Arabian Sūqs and to have uncovered some unforeseen meanings.

9.8 Recommendations for Future Research

Since the research concentrated on those shared aspects of a traditional Arabian Sūq's experience and its embodied poetic meanings, the research did not exhaust all social/human conditions—gender, religious groups, cultural idiosyncrasies and disability—that could have influenced the Sūq's perception and experience at a particular place and time. Similarly, in discussing the findings of the Idea Networking diagrams (sections 5.6, 6.6 and 7.7), the research only focused on those narratives that were relevant to its objectives, hinting at other possible relations that could be further explored to improve our understanding of

the region. These include the development of Arabian mythology, the relationship between politics and ideology, and the role of propaganda—be it ideological, political, economic or architectural—in influencing the production of Arabian subjectivity. In addition to these areas, the direct discussions and findings of the research propose the following as possible future research questions:

1. How can the Arabian dualities of *fadaā/tareeq* be rehabilitated into the overall design models of contemporary Arab cities, acknowledging the current political, global, economic and technological situation? What are some possible reforms that architectural education, retail design and policy making can offer to encourage the development of such models?
2. What is the role of women, religious/ethnic minorities and the disabled in defining and developing a traditional Arabian Sūq's socio-urban experience?
3. How can the readings offered by this research be used to further understand the elements of a common mythic horizon in Post-Islamic Arab cities?
4. What can the study of Pre-Islamic Arabian heritage, particularly mythology, offer to the fields of creative writing, graphic design, interior design and film making?



10

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Appendix A.1

Interviews – Questions Sample Sheet
Introduction

Phenomenological interviews anticipate an in-depth reflection on a particular phenomenon, where both interviewer and interviewee engage in an open-ended dialogue about the interviewee's perception, experience and memory of the phenomenon in question. Accordingly, the aim of this study is not to get information of the phenomenon's (in here the Arabian Sūq) appearance but rather its meaning, in other words not its 'what' but rather its 'why' and 'how.'

Interview Proposed Questions

Phenomenological interviews are usually semi-structured dialogues that revolve around a specific theme or experience. The following is an example of the proposed interview's questions, noting that the dialogue, in terms of order and wording, will be remodelled and possibly also expanded according to the interviewee's responses.

- Hello, thank you very much for accepting to conduct this interview with me today ...
- This interview and its content are part of my PhD research on Arabian Sūqs. The purpose of the research is to better understand people's experience of traditional market streets, so do you agree for me to use your answers as part of this research and to include them in future publications?
- As confirmed in the Participant's Information Sheet and Consent Forms, your identity will remain anonymous. Since this is an interview concerning the meaning of Arabian Sūqs as experienced by Arabian communities, it is important to get a little information about your ethnic background. Do you consider yourself an Arab? Where were you born/raised?
- How often do you visit traditional Arabian Sūqs whether in Dubai or any other Arabic city? What do you mainly do in the Sūq, in other words what makes you want to visit them?
- Can you describe the preparations, if any, that you make before coming to the Sūq? For example, bringing along specific clothes, accessories or gadgets ... etc. In case you do any particular preparation, can you tell me why they are important for you while visiting the Sūq?
- Do you usually go there alone or with friends/family? Why?

- Can you describe the activities that you do in a traditional Sūq? For example, the types of food/drinks you taste, the places you visit, the things you buy, if any?
- Do you think Arabian Sūqs differ from place to the other? If yes, how is it so?
- Do you know a specific person or place in the Sūq that you come to visit? What do you usually talk about with that person or with the other people in the Sūq?
- In your opinion, what characterizes the traditional Sūq from any other street or mall?
- Can you please describe one of your most enduring memories in a traditional Sūq, whether pleasant or unpleasant?

Appendix A.2

Interviews – Participants' Information Sheet

Please take some time to read this information and ask questions if anything is unclear.

Contact details can be found at the end of this document.

- **What is the purpose of this study?**

The purpose of this interview is to get an in-depth understanding of people's experience of traditional Arabian Sūqs.

- **Who is organizing this research?**

The research for this study is being undertaken by Jasmine Shahin who a Doctoral student in the Leicester School of Architecture, Faculty of Arts, Design and Humanities at De Montfort University, UK.

Research Ethics Committee has reviewed and approved this research.

- **Why have I been chosen?**

By using the interview this project hopes to uncover the different structures and patterns of meaning that are formulated in relation to the Arabs' experience of traditional Arabian market streets. Participants are chosen based on their ethnic origin, being identified as Arabs. The choice of participants is also based on their ability to communicate effectively in English and their prior experience of traditional Arabian Sūqs.

We aim to interview 6-10 participants from the age of 16 – 70 of Arabian origin.

- **Do I have to take part?**

Participation in this study is voluntary and you may ask the researcher questions before agreeing to participate. However, we believe that your contribution will assist in better understanding the different socio-urban discourses at play in the experience of Arabian public spaces.

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to sign a consent form. However, at any time, you are free to withdraw from the study and if you choose to withdraw, we will not ask you to give any reasons.

- **What will happen to me if I take part?**

If you agree to take part in this study, we will interview you and audio record the interview.

The interview will be conducted by Jasmine Shahin and will last between 20-30 minutes.

We may ask you to participate in a follow-up interview, though participation in this is optional.

- **What are the possible benefits of participating?**

The study aims to better understand the different socio-urban factors at play in the making and experience of traditional Arabian market streets. The aim as such is not to get a description of what is in the traditional Sūq but how Arabs remember the space, engage with it and identify with its different places. Your participation will help improve our current understanding of the space and hopefully also assist in providing new insights into the study of socio-urban practices in the region. So, aside from moral benefits, your participation will not entail any financial remuneration.

- **What are the possible risks of taking part?**

While we hope that your experience will be pleasant, some questions may require you to describe in detail some personal experiences, some of which may make you uncomfortable. At any time during the interview you can choose to withdraw.

- **How will my interview be used?**

Evidence collected from the interview will be used to investigate into the contemporary perception of traditional Arabian Sūqs and their modes of socio-urban participation. Collected evidence will be recorded, transcribed, analysed and coded for purposes of extracting some persistent themes in the experience of Arabian market streets.

On the consent form we will ask you to confirm that you are happy to assign your copyright for the interview to us, which means that you consent to the researcher using and quoting from your interview.

- **What will happen to the results of the project?**

All the information that we collect about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. You will not be identified in any reports or publications and your name and other personal information will be anonymized.

- **What happens to the interviews collected during the study?**

Interviews will be audio recorded, transcribed and stored digitally, managed by the researcher for the duration of the project. Only the researcher and her supervisors will have access to the interviews and personal information.

- **What happens at the end of the project?**

If you agree to participate in this project, the research will be written up as a Doctoral Thesis. You may request a summary of the research findings by contacting the researcher. On successful submission of the thesis, it will be deposited with De Montfort Open Research Archive (“**DORA**”)/Turnitin and will be published with open access meaning that it will be available to all internet users. At the end of this project, the audio and digital evidence collected from interviews with participants will be deposited at the UK Evidence Service for use by future researchers.

- **What about use of the evidence in future research?**

If you agree to participate in this project, the research may be used by other researchers and regulatory authorities for future research.

- **Who is funding the research?**

This research is funded by the researcher (Jasmine Shahin), hence no governmental or commercial body is involved.

- **What should I do if I have any concerns or complaints?**

If you have any concerns about the project, please speak to the researcher, who should acknowledge your concerns within ten (10) working days and give you an indication of how your concern will be addressed. If you remain unhappy or wish to make a formal complaint, please contact Dr Jamileh Manoochehri (jmanoochehri@dmu.ac.uk) or Dr Emily Baines (ebaines@dmu.ac.uk).

- **Fair Processing Statement**

This information which you supply and that which may be collected a part of the project will be entered into a filing system or evidence base and will only be accessed by the researcher and supervisor involved in the project. The information will be retained by De Montfort University and will only be used for the purpose of research, statistical and audit and possibly commercial purposes. By supplying this information, you are consenting to us storing your information for the purposes above. The information will be processed by use in accordance with the provisions of GDPR 2018. No identifiable evidence will be published.

Many thanks,

Jasmine Shahin, MPhil

Mobile 00917504201178

Email P07031229@my365.dmu.ac.uk

Appendix A.3

Interviews – Participants’ Consent Forms

Researcher Jasmine Shahin
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This agreement is made in regard to the recorded interview(s) which took place on

In consideration of my participation in the research and other valuable consideration provided by the De Montfort University (“**University**”), I declare the following:

Declaration:

- I confirm that I have read and understood the participant information sheet for this study
- I have had the opportunity to ask questions if necessary and have had these answered satisfactorily
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that at any time, I am free to withdraw without giving any reason
- If I withdraw, my evidence will be removed from the study and will be destroyed
- I understand that De Montfort University Ethics Committee has reviewed and approved this study
- I give permission to the University and those authorised by the University to take images of and/or record me for the above project and/or video/film and/or sound recording (“**Recordings**”)
- I grant to the University the right and right to authorise others to make the Recordings available across all platforms and in all media (in whole or in part, transcribed or otherwise) in perpetuity throughout the world for educational, research, commercial and promotional purposes at the University, such uses include but not limited to print and online publication and broadcast
- I agree to taking part in the above study and recording, and hereby assign to the University all copyright in my contribution for use in all work resulting from this project and future projects
- I agree that my evidence may be managed, stored and archived at the University in accordance with GDPR 2018, and that the University may store electronically the information and Recordings outside the European Economic Area (EEA)

- I understand that **my responses will be kept strictly confidential**, that **all my personal and sensitive evidence will be anonymised in any reports or publication** and **my name will not be identified in any reports or publication**
- I understand that sensitive personal evidence may be collected during this interview. This may include information relating to race or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious beliefs, physical/mental health, trade union membership, sexual life or criminal activities
- I understand that the research will be written up as a Doctoral Thesis by Jasmine Shahin.
- I give permission to other researchers and regulatory authorities to have access to my evidence in relevant future research
- I understand how to raise any concerns or complaints about this study
- I am aware that there are no compensation arrangements
- I will inform the researcher should my contact details change
- This consent form shall be governed in all respects by English law and the English courts

Name, signature and date:

Name of participant.....Date.....

Signature.....

Postal address/phone/email.....

A copy of the signed and dated consent form and the participant information leaflet should be given to the participant and retained by the researcher to be kept securely on file.

Appendix A.4

Interviews – Transcription (01) MF

Observation. My visit to Dubai's Old district of *Bastakia* and its old Sūq was a rather disappointing one. Not only because I could not find many people to interview—as I was hoping—but also because of the extreme September heat that was mixed with high levels of humidity, especially that the older part of the city is located right to the Creek. I decided not to park my car at the *Bastakia's* small parking space, which have been rather patched up around the old district as a womb-like vehicular depot. Most of the parking spaces there were dedicated either to touristic buses or for the people working at the information desks and the shops. So, I parked further away, and I had to walk for almost 12min. to reach the entrance of the Old settlement. Reaching there I was soaked in sweat, especially that I decided to wear heavier clothes than my usual Dubai self, respecting the cultural prescriptions of the area. I stopped at the main open space, greeted by an Indian security guard. I asked him for the closest stall to buy water, he told me that there are few cafes in the area—mentioning Costa in specific—and that there is a very nice traditional Café—Basta Art Café—behind the mosque, near the main Sūq street. I walked past the deserted main entrance, which had on my left the information centre building and, on the right, a traditional house or 'Hair House,' as called by the locals. I walked past the open square into a smaller path, which was itself intercepted by several smaller alleyways. The air seemed lighter here, since the closely-built walls allowed cool air to cross from the Creek side into the settlement. The smaller alleyways, which were still deserted, had a mesmerizing charm, with their small openings, curved hidden passages and signature wind towers. I decided to walk through one of these smaller passages, whose narrowness allowed the walls and towers to create generous blankets of shade throughout. Moving from one passage to the other, I started noticing small art galleries and artisan workshop signs adorning the tops of the small wooden doors of the nearby buildings. I peeked through one of the them to investigate, but there was almost no sign of human interaction. I continued walking until I reached the main Sūq street, which did not only signal the end of my peaceful shaded journey but

Researcher's Notes and Identification of Sub-themes

The effects of the weather in the Sūq's experience.

Cultural norms and dress codes.

Smaller street layouts as natural solution for resolving the Sūq's weather problems.

Dubai's current Sūq is not an authentic experience of the traditional Arabian market street.



Figure A.4.1 - Basta Art Café, Dubai. By author.

transported me to a different reality of Dubai. The Old Sūq Street, which ran along the Creek shore, was almost fully occupied by workers, who were running back and forth to catch the ferry busses or to deliver their hand-drawn carts to the shops. The street was wide enough to accommodate not only pedestrian sidewalks but also two lanes of cars. The multi-story box-like buildings, which now replace some of the older structures in the area, had huge signs on top and on the sides, pointing at the different products that are tucked securely inside the shops and not outside. It was sunny and hot again! Amidst my disappointment that I could not locate any Arabs to interview [based on my own previous knowledge of Arabian dressing codes and dialects], which was intercepted again with my sudden feelings of perspiration, I decided to walk in the opposite direction to look for Basti Art Café, where I can have a quick cold drink and hopefully find someone to talk to. The Café was right across the corner—thankfully—so I entered, and it was again completely empty. I was greeted by two Indian waiters, who showed me around the beautiful facility, with its traditional furnishings, benches and simple décor. They were very enthusiastic to having had a visitor on the day—or so they said—to the extent that they invited me to see the roof top. I felt a little uneasy, especially that I was a woman and alone. So, I just ordered a bottle of icy cold water, paid and left. On my way back to the car, I noticed two Arab-looking ladies, wearing abayas and head scarves. I approached them, and they agreed to participate. We went back to Basta Art Café. This time, I went to the roof top seating and took many beautiful pictures. One of the two ladies was Jordanian (MF) and the other Palestinian (NA).

Gender-related differences in experiencing Sūqs.



Figure A.4.2 - Top, the old market structure in the middle of the houses at Bastakia. Middle left, Asian workers waiting for ferry busses. Middle right, shaded alleyways of Bastakia. Bottom left, the Sūq street near Bastakia. Bottom right, interior of Basta Art Café. By author.

- 1) Hello, thank you for accepting to participate in this interview. As outlined in the form, your identity will remain anonymous ...

Ok...

- 2) Can you just tell me your nationality and age please?

Right [emmm] ... 39 and Jordanian.

- 3) How many times did you visit a traditional Sūq, do you go there often?

I try as much as I can [emmm] as long as it is not [too] close by but as close as possible ... See usually traditional Sūqs are way inside the city because it is usually the old structure of the city itself and usually a lot of traffic because it is old, and it is still raw...

- 4) But do you think it is a lot of traffic because it is old? Or it is a lot of traffic because people like going there? Or because a lot of people live there?

[emmm] let's say because every city starts out small and then they expand so the infrastructure actually expands through the land but mainly most of the action will be at the central Sūq. A lot of tourists will go to the central Sūq because they want to get closer to the culture of that country or that city and they want to feel this connection and they will not feel the connection if only you go to a mall you know, you have to have something old to connect with then you get the feel of it.

- 5) Do you feel you connect more with the old parts of the city and not the new parts of the city?

Definitely, because you see art in its rawest form, the beginnings of the art will always be in the old structure. Then new places are always going to be modernized and ... sure it is user-friendly; I mean they facilitate a lot of things for you but then it is too mechanical you know. You don't have to work hard for it to understand how this artist came about to do this or the buildings ... they are all going to be systematic, you know. But in a Sūq no, you have different corners of different pieces of art, different feelings of people, Different People [assertive voice], you know. You kinda see how other people see it too.

- 6) Do you feel how other people see it too? Or is it just you and the place and the ... [pause]

[emmm] yeah, I could say that, I mean [pause reflecting on something, maybe remembering] let's say a photographer ok? If they want something of value they won't go to a mall, they go to a ruin or deserted beach or an old Sūq ... and if you look inside their lens you can tell ... you can actually see what they are looking at, they are looking for something people overlook, you know.

Old Structures.
Raw and plentiful.

Closer to culture.
Feel the connection
with the Old.

Different
experiences,
different sensory
stimulation.

Photographer's lens
will capture the
old/authentic/of
value.
Some of the Sūqs'
parts are
overlooked.

- 7) So, you think Sūqs are places where people overlook stuff? [pause] ... Miss them?

Yes [assertive voice]

(7:1) Dismiss them ...

Yes [assertive voice], definitely!

- 8) Ok, what do wear usually going to Sūq? Do you wear your everyday or you prep yourself?

[pause] flat shoes [giggles] is key to Sūqs.

(8:1) Interruption: coffee house waiter brings in the drinks for us. She orders a Latte and I order a Turkish coffee.

So, we wanna be comfortable moving around. Imagine you have been in heels the whole morning and like you have this thing that you are looking for, because you are not going to find it in one shop, you have to go through the whole thing and they are usually long roads of shops and you have to check out everything... haggle for prices... that's the fun of the Sūq, you have to haggle even though I don't know how to, I try [giggles] but I still don't know. But it's fun, it is always fun even if it is 100 degrees outside, it is still fun.

- 9) Do you find a need to cover up more than usual?

I have to say yes [pause reflecting] ... see in these places [emmm] I don't know... Maybe not. They see a lot of tourists, and tourists do not cover up, especially if they go to a hot country they wear whatever is comfortable... but personally I would feel more comfortable if I was covered up so the people I am actually talking to are concentrating on the thing I want to buy rather than the way I look or what I am wearing.

- 10) So, you think that people in Arabic Sūqs would actually concentrate on what you are wearing?

[emmm] maybe... see people will always comment on something or they will give you a smirk without actually giving you the comment... it's mostly not something they would say but an uncomfortable look, or a glance or ... I could be paranoid I don't know, to be honest.

- 11) Ok, tell me when you go there is there a favourite food or drink that you like, or you make sure that when you go to that place you want to taste a certain food or drink?

Usually before I go I like to look up what kind of street food they offer, if it is not a place that I have already been to or I know then I usually know what is there on the table... if it is not something new then I do not wanna try it, but if it is something I am craving for yes definitely.

(11:1) But you don't go there specially to eat something...

Exploration – hunting –
haggling.
Sūqs are fun.

Participant's responses showed few contradictions. Such as this entry. Cover up for her is important to avoid being looked at, yet for tourists it is ok not to.

Constant awareness of the Other and his/her opinion of one's appearance.

No, some of these vendors have amazing skills while doing something you already know what it tastes like but you like seeing them do it, you know, I mean it's amazing what some vendors actually do...

(11:2) Like? can you give me some examples?

The speed at which they serve you is unbelievable and the confidence... well actually seeing them doing it is more unbelievable... they don't even look doing it they are like *tchuk tchuk tchuk* you know, and your plate is done. When you go somewhere else, you actually have to wait for like 15 minutes to be served exactly the same plate and it won't even taste that good ... [pause] and double the price [giggles].

12) Ok, do you usually go alone or with people?

With people definitely [quick answer almost interrupting the question].

(12:1) Why do you go with people?

[emmm] for the company, I like to share the moment with other people I will not enjoy it as much if I am alone, cuz I am going to for the experience not for work. See, if I was going there for work, yes, I will definitely go alone. But if only for the feel and experience of the Sūq definitely with people.

13) And... you get to talk to people there, other than the vendors? [sipping coffee with a head nod suggesting agreement]

(13:1) Or, is there a specific vendor you go to or you just go there to hunt?

Hunt [faint smile].

14) What do usually talk about with your friends there? What comes to mind?

[emmm] see I usually go with people who kinda like the same things I like, so we at the same things in the same way... so we have a connection... same comments, or they can have opposing comments which would be a nice argument like no this would look better if it was like this, you know. You could have alterations of the same thing in your head ... like I like this piece of art, but it would have looked better if they did it this way.

15) Ok, so you mentioned that going to the Sūq is different from going to the mall. But you go to a mall more than you go to a Sūq...

Definitely, yes.

Sūq vendors have amazing skills preparing food.

Sūq vendors are fast and confident.

Sound of chopping ...
Good prices + Fast service

Talking about money is possibly an embarrassing subject for the participant since the last comment was accompanied by giggles.

Sūqs are communal experiences – Sharing the moment – Enjoyment.
To feel the Sūq you have to be with people.

Dialogue and communication
Differing views – Arguments

16) So, what is the difference? If I ask you what is the real difference about how you feel in a mall as opposed to a Sūq?

Let's see, easier parking definitely [giggle] in our day to day life we are just used to going to the mall, you feel more comfortable ... you don't need to engage with other people because it is a full open space of different people, different nationalities, different backgrounds, different everything and [short pause] I am sorry to say that but you don't have to interact with people when you are in a mall ... but in a Sūq you kinda do, smaller space, you can even take an opinion of a stranger next to you who is looking at the same exact thing, you know. It doesn't have to be your friend, but you can talk to other people too... [emmm] in a mall everything is on display. In a Sūq, they will display some of the things but if you want the real treasures, they have it hidden in there... so you have to have this connection with the vendor himself then they will give you the good stuff, you know.

17) So, the vendors are important?

Of course, they are the essence of the Sūq. If he is not good enough he is not going to sell you something that you want... they have to understand the kind of person you are, what you would like or might like and then they will go like 'I have something for you, you like this thing, so you might like this,' you know.

18) So, what your best memory of the Sūq?

[pause reflecting, looking up] best memory? [emmm pause again] I don't know if I have a particular memory, it just an overall pleasant experience.

(18:1) What is it that makes it pleasant? What in there that you find pleasant?

See I enjoy long walks with plenty of things to look at, and there is no better place than a Sūq because every corner is engaging, it has something [pause] and you have to look once and twice to actually see it right... plenty of colours could actually be a bit dazzling at the beginning, so you really have to look into it [emmm] good time, it has to be good weather. If it is sticky and humid, you are really not going to enjoy it because you are going to think of how hot you feel at the moment... yeah sure you can have a cold drink but it's still ...

(18:2) What type of cold drinks would you have to add up to your pleasant experience?

Juices.

(18:3) Do you remember any particular nice juice you had?

[emmm] yeah, they usually have this ... for example in Egypt they have sugar cane juice, it is far too sweet for my liking, but it is still good. It is like a staple in some of the Sūqs,

Malls are more comfortable/easier. Malls do not require engagement or interaction. Sūqs are intimate – encourage communication with friends, vendors and strangers. Mall everything is on display. Sūqs have hidden treasures. Connecting with vendors.

Vendors are the essence of the Sūq.

Sūqs are a pleasant experience

Sūqs require participation with vendors, products and people. Plenty of things to look at - Every corner is engaging – You need to look once and twice – Plenty of Colours Hot weather limits Sūqs' experience

Another contradiction here as opposed to the response in (8)

Sūqs are a place for trying indigenous food and drinks (Sugar Cane in Egypt)

usually you'd rather have a fresh juice than a soda which you could have in a supermarket. You wanna have something special, or kinda special that relates to this place.

19) So, do you have any unpleasant memories?

[long pause] Maybe the unavailability of a toilet. If you want to spend the whole morning, then you would rather not drink anything. But overall no, it usually is a pleasant experience.

(19:1) Do you recall any uncomfortable comments, smells, animals?

Yeah, the smell is an important part. You have to keep in mind, when you go to these places you will smell funny things, I mean you will smell the sewer, you will smell dogs, cats, you see the dirt ... but you overlook it all. Cuz, ok I am not going there to scrutinize everything, no, I am going for the good time and I will look at the bigger nicer picture and I can let go of all the other things, to an extent of course. Ok, I wouldn't like walking in a puddle, even if it is a nice Sūq, but it has to be somewhat clean.

20) So, you kinda have an expectation before you go that you might be encountering these things, and this is why it is ok?

Sure... Wouldn't you going to any other place, whatever the place is. You always have some kind of vision, and you say I am going to this place and I expect this and this and this to be there, and I would like some things not to be there, you know. But I am looking for the good experience, but you might as well expect some downfalls in some aspects.

Sūqs don't usually have public toilets

Sūqs have funny smells at times, but these can be overlooked in exchange for the anticipated good time.

Presupposed image of the Sūq and its anticipated experience play a great role in the Arabian perception of the space.

Appendix A.5

Interviews – Transcription (02) NA

- 1) Hello, thank you very much for accepting to conduct this interview with me today. This interview and its content are part of my PhD research on Arabian Sūqs. The purpose of the research is to better understand people's experience of traditional market streets, so do you agree for me to use your answers as part of this research and to include them in future publications?

Yes, I do.

- 2) As confirmed in the Participant's Information Sheet and Consent Forms, your identity will remain anonymous. Since this is an interview concerning the meaning of Arabian Sūqs as experienced by Arabian communities, it is important to get a little information about your ethnic background. Allow me to ask you, do you consider yourself an Arab? Where were you born/raised?

Yes, I was born in Jordan and I was raised actually, you could say around few Arabic countries, Middle East. My nationality is Palestinian originally.

- 3) How many times do you often visit traditional Arabian Sūqs, whether in Dubai or any other place you've been to?

[emmm] not very often to be honest [giggles]

- 4) Ok, but have you visited any?

Of course, I have! [emmm] I have been to the Sūqs actually here in the UAE, I have also been to the ones in Jordan, I've been to the ones in Palestine in Jerusalem [the participant later also mentioned being in Damascus and Oman], so yes, I have been around.

- 5) Ok, so what do you mainly do in the Sūqs when you go there to visit?

So, I basically go for two things, I usually go there just to explore the authenticity of the actual space... I want to experience the actual culture, look at the architecture, see what kinds of food... So basically, it's a full experience. Sometimes I do few shopping, a lot of shopping actually [big smile], I enjoy shopping. So yeah [faint laugh].

- 6) Can you describe the preparations, if any, that you do before coming to the Sūq? For example, do you bring along a specific type of clothes, accessories, gadgets... And if you bring any or do any preparations, why do you do them?

Ok, so first and foremost I have to go really early in the morning, so I prepare myself to go there most of the day. I wear of course comfortable clothes and if I could, or actually a lot of the times

Researcher's Notes and Identification of Sub-themes

Authenticity of the place in terms of culture, architecture, food ... etc.

Sūqs are a full experience.

Sūqs' typology and experience require a specific lifestyle, constant movement, comfortable clothing, exploration, early morning.

bring with me a professional camera or any kind of camera to take some photos [emmm] so yeah, of course money [laughter].

- 7) **Are they expensive, I mean do you need a lot of money going there?** [emmm] I think it depends on what you are going for. If you are going for something that is more [emmm] I could say like souvenirs, maybe sometimes it is on the pricy side but if you bargain well you could get good prices, yes.

- 8) **You feel like... [emmm] since you are a *hijabi* female, do you feel like you need to cover more than your usual scarf and long sleeves shirt and trousers, or you think you can go with something looser, less covered? In other words, if you can just describe to me how do you feel about the dressing part?**

[emmm] so, I am not really into [asking about the meaning of a word in English (شو يعني متعصبة)] the conservative side, I'm more to the relaxed side, yeah modern, I like fashion. I don't mind experiencing some fashionable hijab. So, I can go sometimes for loose clothes, and sometimes I go for something more [hand gestures suggesting fancy]

- (8:1) And they both work in the Sūq? You don't feel like you need to wear something specific to go to the Sūq?**

Usually, for the Sūq I usually go for loose clothes or just jeans, something casual, sneakers ...

- (8:2) Nothing too sophisticated.**

No, no, nothing too sophisticated.

- (8:3) Why?**

Maybe because I like to be comfortable to go around, to go up the stairs, sitting. I like to experience Sūqs to the fullest, to sit actually on the sidewalk, have some snack [emmm] I don't know. I guess to be more comfortable and to do a lot more things. So, yeah, I like to be more on the casual, comfortable side.

- 9) **So, when you go there, do you usually go alone, or you usually take friends or family?**

Both. For me to experience it fully, I like to go alone. I enjoy going to Sūqs alone [emmm] maybe because I like to go in any kind of places or stores, whatever I desire as long as I want. Sometimes, you are obliged to stick to your group, if they are, some areas they don't like to go into... So yeah, I prefer going alone, but I do go with family and friends sometimes.

- (9:1) What are some of those areas that you would like to go to and your friends might object to?**

[emmm] it's not object to but more like a preference, I guess, maybe some areas I would like to go, maybe up to certain alleys, and they would be 'no, no, why do we have to go there. Let's just go to a place that is more, let's say, accessible [laugh].

Sūqs are casual

Sitting on sidewalks
Having snacks.

(9:2) Accessible?

You know, I like to go to alleys and experience these hidden gems, you could say. But some people like to go to the more [emmm] let's say commercialized areas.

(9:3) What is in those alleys that you want to dig for? What do you want to see there?

Sometimes you see a lot of old architecture and sometimes you find these really old places like cafés or... I don't know I like that. I think it's interesting. I don't know, sometimes you even find these shops that have not been discovered so much and they have really nice authentic things.

(9:4) So, you think the alleys are more authentic than the commercial spaces?

I guess to a certain extent, of course it depends on which alley we are talking about [laugh].

10) Can you tell me a little bit in detail about some of the activities that you do in a traditional Sūq? Like, what are the different activities you do other than you said, you like to sit, you like to taste food, you like to walk in the alleys? Can you describe with some details those foods or drinks, that walking experience?

First of all, I like [emmm] I love those really, you know those old, let's say those rustic places that serve very traditional food. I like those. For instance, in Jerusalem, ok, instead of going to these fancy cafés, I like to go stand in front of these shops where they have food displayed. You know, we have this certain type of bread or pastries... I prefer these than going to actual fancy commercialized café.

(10:1) What kind of pastries do they have?

Some of the pastries have like dates, some of them are more to the salty side, like cheese or *zaatar* [Arabic spice similar to wild oregano].

(10:2) And they smell good?

Amazing, they look amazing. So, smelling or tasting them is great.

(10:3) So, does the area in the street smell like the dates? Would you know the place by the smell?

Yes, you do. You smell a lot of fresh bread, and you smell a lot of the spices. Lot of the areas, which have those nice spices, these places I love, they are like rustic. [Discussion about Turkish Sūqs and the participant's experience there].

(10:4) What about them that is rustic?

They are not polished, everything is the old architecture. The stones are from long time back [emmm] people are very hospitable, very kind, they don't have the prices too high. You could say it is more of the original feel. I like that. My husband hated those [long laugh], my husband hates shopping. I like shopping so... I like exploring.

(10:5) Do you sit on the cafes?

Definitely. The one in Jerusalem actually, we had coffee, I guess.

(10:6) Where there lots of people?

[emmm] Yes, not too many. But yes, there were people.

Alleys have hidden gems.

Old architecture- Old places – Cafés – Authentic.

Rustic – Traditional food

Amazing smell and taste.

Fresh food

Stones – Gates.
People are hospitable, kind, nice.
Original feel.

(10:7) How are people there in the café where you were sitting and drinking coffee?

[coughing, long pause and then waiter brings orders]

Everyone seems to be doing their own thing. They talk. Most probably you would find either friends or some guys talking. Not a lot of families, it depends which Sūqs you go to. Just like any normal café you would go to but more on the simpler side.

- 11) So, when you go there you go alone or with friends; and do you talk to people, any stranger, or you only talk to your friends?

Ok, I don't really talk to strangers most of the time. But if it is with a group definitely with the group. If I am gonna talk to strangers, then it's usually with [emmm] if I am visiting a shop. Yeah, maybe then I could talk to a stranger or two [laugh]. But in cafés no, only with friends or group that you are with.

(11:1) What do you talk about with your friends or with the strangers in the shops?

With strangers in the shops, most probably, it maybe about the actual artefacts or what's happening in the market or... not much basically with strangers. But with friends and family, maybe talk about what's happening at home or how we are having fun in the Sūq, or what we're gonna do next, so yeah.

- 12) You told me you've been to different Sūqs, different Arabian Sūqs, in Jerusalem, in Dubai, in Turkey, which is not on the Arabic side, but do you think they differ from one place to the other? Like, does each have a different feel to it?

Definitely, the feel is actually the actual culture... let's say here in the UAE, if you go to those Sūqs you find a different kind of culture, not just what they are displaying, also the architecture, the way people also ... the way how you actually deal with people, when you talk to people. It's a little bit different not too different but everyone has a different feel, like in Jerusalem for instance the artefacts on display are also different. But the actual feel in all of them has the same authenticity, the simple life, the simple way of thinking, the simple way you deal with people. It's basically the same, but the authenticity is different, the architecture, the displays...

- 13) What do you think makes a Sūq different from a mall?

It's definitely different, for sure.

(13:1) You would go to the mall more often?

Maybe because it is more accessible, because it is easy to reach. With Sūqs you usually need to plan it regarding what time you are going, how are you going to manage going there,

Talking in groups or with each other – *Maybe a lot of noise?*

Simpler side of life

Actual culture

Authenticity – Simple way of thinking – Simple way of dealing. *Maybe denoting benevolence or maybe naivety? Participant here is unable to express her feelings. Possibly what she meant was that all Sūqs are similar and that the differences have to do with cultural idiosyncrasies pertaining to each country?*

is it through a friend or you are going to go there through other kind of transportation. Malls are more accessible, and I think the way they've been facilitated with the air conditioning and the [emmm] you could say there are a lot of facilities inside the shopping malls like supermarkets or something. So, yeah.

14) A pop-up question, cuz you mentioned that you photograph a lot, what do you photograph?

Architecture basically...[emmm] sometimes you find [emmm] let's say [emmm... deep thinking] I did a little bit of photography in Jerusalem; I had those really old walls from those old gates of Jerusalem. There is something about these old gates that is very very fascinating, so I took photos of that. I usually take photos of the ambiance, sometimes it is just the whole ambiance. Sometimes you just go into a Sūq and the way it looks, how the carts are being organized, the way people are moving around, the way spices are being displayed, the actual [emmm] the ceiling is amazing, honestly. I just try to capture, you know, any kind of detail that comes across me. If I am with people, I usually go for more you could say of a general photo, ok. But if I am alone, definitely I go for those small details.

(14:1) Is there any small detail that you remember linking in a photo? [long pause trying to remember something?] No, I don't know.

(14:2) Walls, paintings, maybe wood carvings?

No. I don't remember honestly. But, no, not a lot of specific things, but [emmm] usually it is the architecture. It is more of a general not a specific.

(14:3) Not zoomed in zoomed out ...

It is more like a zoomed out. I take a lot of those.

15) We were talking about the mall, you said how it is accessible and has facilities. What else is different about the atmosphere and the ambiance, your feelings about it?

Like I said is more accessible, maybe it has to do not only because it is easy to reach, maybe also because of those daily life, you could say, necessities you could find it there [cough] if you wanna go for something more of a fashionable side, you could say, regarding clothes or any other gadget, it's there. Because usually in Sūqs you don't find these, it's usually more of the traditional, you could say, I don't know, stuff.

(15:1) So, you prefer the mall to the Sūq for the everyday? Yes.

(15:2) But, the Sūq is more of a getaway, if you wish? Yes, definitely, yes!

(15:3) Is there anything that makes you prefer the Sūq over the mall? Is there anything missing in the mall?

Authenticity in everything, basically. In everything, food, architecture, ambiance, the way even people deal with you,

Old gates are fascinating. The ambiance of how carts are organized, how people move about and how things are put on display.

The architecture.

Malls are more fashionable,

Authenticity in everything.

it's all there. Even, like I said, a simple drink or coffee or whatever or even having something like nuts is definitely a different flavour over there other than the actual mall. For sure.

16) Last question, what are your most enduring memories in a traditional Sūq? It could be pleasant or unpleasant.

Very pleasant for sure. For me, every experience in a traditional Sūq is a very pleasant one. Even if I'm for some reason that day I am not feeling well or not happy, if I'm actually there it's a pleasant experience. For sure, it's a getaway from daily life, from routine. You just go there and experience something, you know, in the open air.

(16:1) Any specific memory? An event that happened, an incident that really sticks to your head.

I think it's the one [emmm] not in Jerusalem [asking about the name of a town in Arabic (شور نابلس؟)] in Nablus ok? There is an incident, we've been to the old Sūq in Nablus, there are two types of Sūqs in Nablus, the ones that are more sophisticated, you know, and there are the ones which are more to the authentic old kind of traditional Sūqs. The one incident, actually I was with a group of friends, and we got a little tired of walking, so we ended up in an alley, sitting on the floor, and we had, you know those *tormos* [Arabic word for lupin], some of us had that and others had those corn on a cob. In the street, in the middle of whatever [giggle], we just got tired, we sat in the middle of the street and we had a lot of fun that day. Beautiful weather, feeling free, I guess because we were just having fun and there was no [emmm] nothing to impose on you like, you know, those daily routines, sometimes they can get a little imposing.

(16:2) How did the alley look like? Was it dark?

No no, it wasn't dark. It was during the day, it was like any normal alley, we were between those traditional houses and we just sat there. We saw one of those carts that sells those things and we took them and sat in the middle of the road and started laughing like idiots [last sentence in Arabic]. We had a lot of fun [laughing].

Sūqs are very pleasant experiences – Open air.

Care-free ambiance, sitting on the street, eating food, buying from carts.

Memory is fun-filled. Laughter.

Appendix A.6

Interviews – Transcription (03) MA



Researcher's Notes and
Identification of Sub-themes

Figure A.6.1 - Traditional alleyway in Sūq al-Safafir, Baghdad.

Observation. My second visit to Dubai's Old Sūq near *Bastakia* was very similar to the first one, which was only a week earlier. Yet, this time I decided to go directly to Costa Café, located at the Old settlement itself, hoping to interview some people, who already work in the area. I entered the shop and ordered a cold Coffee mix. The place was empty both inside and outside. I asked the waiter about the frequency of the clients and he told me that it is usually quite but sometimes it gets busier during lunch time. It was still early at 10:40am, so I sipped my drink and decided to walk outside and enjoy the richness of the old architecture. The tables outside were bare. There was no sign of movement except for the slowly creeping shadow of a nearby tree. Still, it was beautiful and peaceful. Not long after I decided to go inside the shop, escaping from the humidity and preventing my icy drink to melt, I saw a middle-aged man entering the place. He sat on a table and pulled out a laptop from his briefcase. The waiter went and took his order. I moved directly to his table and asked if I can have a small discussion with him about the Sūq. He agreed enthusiastically, noting that he is an Iraqi Marketing Executive and that he truly loves Old Sūqs. We formally introduced ourselves and then I explained to him the nature of my project. He agreed to participate, and we conducted the interview there.

- 1) Hello, thank you very much for accepting to conduct this interview with me today. This interview and its content are part of my PhD research on Arabian Sūqs. The purpose of the research is to better understand people's experience of traditional market streets, so do you agree for me to use your answers as part of this research and to include them in future publications?
Yes.
- 2) Your identity will remain anonymous, but can you please tell me your nationality?
Canadian/Iraqi [born in Iraq and raised in Dubai and Canada].
- 3) What would you prefer here, Iraqi?
I would go for Iraqi [smile].
- 4) How many times do you often visit traditional Sūqs?
[emmm] just to give you a bit of a background, I live in Dubai, but my work demands that I also visit Iraq. So, if you look at Dubai, we don't really have a lot of traditional Sūqs, but in Iraq we have a lot of traditional Sūqs and whenever I am there, I take the opportunity to visit them. When I am in Dubai, I visit the spice market, which can be considered as a traditional Sūqs as well. So, if I am in Dubai, I would do that twice a year, three times a year. But if I am in Iraq, I would do that once a month basis.
- 5) Why would you take the opportunity to go there?
[emmm] to be into history and appreciating the old tradition of how buildings look, of how things used to be in the past, natural with that element and sense of time and culture and tradition. It makes me feel like going back to a nice era, nice time, when things were simpler, people were nicer, shop owners friendlier, things were outside, displayed in the old way, you know. It gives me that feeling that things are natural, are real.
(5:1) And you like it?
I love it, yeah. I do like it.
- 6) So, when you go to the Sūq is there any specific preparation that you do, anything that you purposefully wear, a gadget that you take with you, a certain accessory that you make sure to have with you whenever you are there, or you just play along?
No, if I am visiting a traditional Sūq then I usually don't like to dress up I really dress down cuz I wanna go with the flow, I really wanna be in touch with the surroundings and how things look. You know, you can overpower these things if you were wearing a suit and you go there, you are out of context, you don't feel the thing. So, definitely when it comes to clothes, I try to dress down to be fitting within the

Old Tradition
To be in History
Culture and Tradition
Simpler/Nicer
Real-Natural

Dress-Down to be in-
touch with the
surroundings

environment... [emmm] in terms of preparations [short pause with emmm] not really but mentally I prepare myself.

(6:1) So, you wake up in the morning saying, “I am going to the Sūq today”?

Yeah, I would be really looking forward to that, I really do. It’s like an activity that I am, you know, planning, looking forward to. It makes me feel yes today I am doing something meaningful. This is what I really like about it.

7) How long do you spend there?

[emmm] I usually go in the mornings, so I wake up early in the morning, have my breakfast there at 10 o’clock. I usually have my lunch there, so I am probably there from 10 until probably 2[pm]. So, about a good 4 hours. I have lunch there because I also enjoy the food that is being offered there. Cuz, you know, the restaurants also take you back in time and you enjoy that simple old traditional way, from the plates, from the cups, from the saucers ... it’s not ... it hasn’t been contaminated by the modern era, you know. It’s here, here is your food, eat it, served from a man who probably, himself, has been working in that restaurant for 30-40 years, so he gives it his heart and soul and you feel it; it’s wow... it’s real home-y food.

8) How does this food taste like?

[big smile] I think it is unreal, you know, you eat in a lot of the new restaurants if you head to any of the shopping malls, you honestly observe that food is tasteless.

(8:1) Ok, so you are talking about the food and the mall, and how the food in the mall is tasteless, so the traditional Sūq’s food tastes like...

[interrupting my question] so authentic, you know, because usually when you go to these Sūqs you find the cook, he is the person who has been working there and he is probably the owner of the shop, he has been there forever, the recipe has been done a hundred times, he cooks it with his soul and heart... it’s so hearty food, it’s done, you know, with a touch of love and passion and ... that’s what makes it... even the plates, you know those old tin plates and saucers; the tea comes in those short glasses the way our grandfathers used to drink it not in the new cups and stuff, so you really come out of there and you are like this is one of the best meals I have ever had... it is made with love. I would say that.

(8:2) Ok, how about your favourite food that you would be ordering there? Is it traditional Iraqi food?

Yeah, so so [small giggle] definitely! We’ve got so many traditional foods that have been done there since the 50’s and the 40’s. So, we have our famous ‘Kubbah’ it’s made out of meat and comes in a bowl ... it’s like a very soupy thing and I always remember it there in winter, it keeps you warm... My grandma used to do it, so it is really done in that very traditional way. We also have the chickpeas, they bring it to you in a small plate with a twist of lemon on it and you eat it, so warms you up. It really takes me back to the time, when I

Doing something meaningful

Enjoyment
Going back in time
Old tradition
Not contaminated by the modern era.
Real food made with heart and soul.

Authentic
Hearty Food
Touch of love and passion
The way our grandfathers did
Love

Warmth
The way my grandma used to do it
Back in-time
Enjoyable
Seeing the things being prepared.

used to visit my grandmother and grandfather; and I start remembering these moments. And to me living in the past is really enjoyable, because people were more authentic, things were more real, we didn't have all these foods that are done with chemicals. Another thing I really enjoy is our traditional foods like the 'Kebabs' and you find that man who bought the meat fresh in the morning and you actually see the ingredients of how things are being prepared and being cooked right in front of you. That's the beauty of it, you know.

(8:3) *Is there a smell that you remember?*

Yeah of course! You know the smell of meat being put on a grill, the actual cooking smell when you drop the onions to the pan and you smell it, cuz that first dish I told you about [*Kubbah*] contains onions, so this smell all of sudden...

(8:4) *So, is this smell all over the Sūq?*

Yes, you would smell that... you would be walking in the street knowing that this shop has been there since 1954 and you would be like, in head, I am here I have to eat there... that's part of why I visit the Sūq, to see the shops but also to enjoy a meal. And food being such an important thing ... I love it!

- 9) *So, the activities you do in the Sūq have to do with you enjoying the food, as you said, the smells, the simplicity which help you in reminiscing and reviving certain memories. But, what else do you do in the Sūq?*

One of the things that you didn't touch on is having a tea there, cuz you know, teas are ...

(9:1) *Where do you have the tea?*

Where I have the tea there is a very old coffee shop, it's very famous actually, it's called '*Shabbandar*.' That's a coffee shop since the 40's, you go there and see old pictures of all the famous people who used to be there. So, I see pictures of Um Kulthoum [famous Egyptian singer of the 40-60's era] when she went to Baghdad. It's a place where the old generation still go, and you would sit there and have your tea... I am sorry my hair stood... I got goosebumps [giggles]... Cuz you know you sit there and you hear those old people talking and they talk about such interesting things, you know, and because these Sūqs usually attract the old generation, the old people, they still enjoy going there cuz they can't go to shopping malls, that's a familiar place to them. So, you sit there, and you enjoy your cup of tea and you would hear them talking about their analysis of how did this generation come out different from them, reminiscing about old times, listening to music in the background, the old traditional music [cough] Even the side table designs are very old wooden structures with paint, the seating is made out of benches with a mattress on it, you know the old traditional one, you know,

Authentic food – Real things
Beauty

Cooking smell

Love

Old generations
Emotional
(goosebumps)
Interesting talks
Reminiscing
Traditional Music
Enjoyment

Ambiance

with a gramophone actually playing the big [emmm] I don't know what you call it

(9:2) **The disk?**

Yes, the disks, the big round ones.

(9:3) **What are the colours of the cushions or mattresses, anything specific?**

So, it's wood and mattresses are usually dark red, white won't work, you know, it gets dusty and dirty so...

(9:4) **You think people choose red for a specific purpose?**

No, I don't think people care ... Honestly, people care about the ambiance. Trust me, the tea is served in a saucer, it is thrown to you, but when you drink it you feel wow that is the best tea I have ever drunk [small giggle]. You know how it's made, you see it, the water is being boiled on charcoal, not on an electric stove.

(9:5) **And you see it?**

You see it in front of your eyes, you know, and it's beautiful. These things you don't see them in today's shopping malls and that's why I enjoy that. You know the guy who sells the pastries the 'Ka'ke' [traditional Arabic pastry round in shape], suddenly comes into the place and starts calling "hey! Who wants a Ka'ke?" and he hands it over to you, it is usually ...

(9:6) **Is it usually fresh?**

Very fresh...

(9:7) **Does it smell...**

[interrupting] it smells amazing with the dates, you know, and you could smell the dates. And then the guy who comes in to polish your shoes and he comes to ask you... so all these things, all these traditions that used to be there in our old Sūqs and that we see in the movies, you actually live them... wow so authentic!

10) **So, tell me do you talk to anyone there? You mingle with people, or you go with a specific person or people? Do you find it fine to be talking to anyone?**

Generally, I talk to people there, because I feel people there are more genuine. When I am sitting in the coffee shop or in the restaurant, they usually, see the restaurants there are very small...

(10:1) **Is the restaurant different from the coffee shop?**

Yes, totally different. They are two different outlets. So, when you are sitting in the restaurant someone would throw a funny comment and everyone would giggle, you know. These places don't have the barriers that are imposed by modern societal structures, no. You go there, you are so down to earth, everybody is the same, everybody is coming with a good spirit. So, you sit there and connect with people. When I go to the coffee shop, I sit, you know they don't have tables, you don't choose your tables it's benches, they are long benches. So, you would have like four benches, every two facing each other like a square, you know. And you can hear the person next to you talking to the person next to him,

See it in front of your eyes
Beauty

Freshness
Amazing Smells
Tradition/Living the past

Genuine people

Funny
No social barriers
Everybody is the same

Living room

Missing old times

and you talk to the person diagonally ... it becomes like sitting in a living room where everyone is talking, everyone is just so natural.

(10:2) *Just let me ask you, is it all men?*

No [affirmative] ... The good thing is I see a lot of women now, a lot of young women actually ...

(10:3) *Also sitting in the coffee place?*

Sitting in the coffee place, talking... because, I mean, we are living in 2018 and we have been invaded by this moral culture and we have a rich history, right [I nod] I think people realize, especially the younger generations, that we miss that old, let me say vintage stuff, and vintage is back in fashion.

(10:4) *So, you think that you like going to the Sūq because it is fashionable?*

Some people go there because it is fashionable, but me I love going there because I enjoy being there. I enjoy walking with history, that's what I love doing.

11) *What do you see in this walk with history? Where do you see it other than the coffee shop and the restaurant?*

I see it in the columns, you know, when you enter the Sūq, there are these big large British style columns, because Iraq was colonized by the UK, so you walk in and you see these columns [smile] I love walking in that area. There is a very famous court as well that was built by the British, so you see the outside structure of it, it is very British. Then behind it, there are these very old narrow alleys, ok, where the balconies touch each other, it is so old and ancient... That's my routine, so I go and start walking in the Sūq, the houses and the alleys, they are so narrow. So, you see the building, you see the people, you see the outlets, you see people selling all sorts of stuff: books to shoes, the food, it's just so much to take as in an experience.

(11:1) *So, up in the balconies, I mean when you gaze up to the balconies that just described, what do you see?*

I see a lot, I see history. I start imagining how people used to live, how people used to talk from these balconies, and they are in a very old design, they are Jewish design, because Jews as well occupied a very big part in Baghdad's history, they were very well off and that area of the Sūq was very well off and you see this designing and structure, so I mean ...

(11:2) *How do you know that they are Jewish?*

From the start of David that is paced on them and...

(11:3) *So, Iraqis living now there they don't notice or...*

No, they know it, but we reminisce about these good times when Baghdad was beautiful and its Sūqs. Look the people who go to the traditional market or Sūqs, what I observe is that they are really educated people who long for a good past. On the contrary, I see the nouveaux-riches or well-off people

Walking with history

Old narrow streets
Balconies touching
each other
Walking
Seeing people,
buildings, outlets and
merchandise

Co-living with others

don't like going there. They like going to shopping malls, maybe because it reminds them of a memory that they want to avoid or a certain difficult life they used to live, so they don't wanna remember this, they wanna appreciate the finer things in life now. That's what I observe.

12) How would you differentiate between the mall and the Sūq in terms of experience?

I would go to the mall if I wanna shop for myself or if I wanna buy something or meet some people that are not really close. I would then go to a shopping mall.

(12:1) But you would go to the Sūq with people who are close to you?

I would go to the Sūq with people who are very close in my thinking, because it is an experience that not many would appreciate. Right? You wanna go there and sink into that experience and not everyone appreciates these things. There are people who don't like these stuff...

(12:2) Why they don't like it?

I don't know, they don't like the experience. They would say let's go to the shopping mall man, it's easier, it's more convenient, there's A/C, the streets are better, the food is safer, cleaner, healthier, I mean...

(12:3) Do you agree that the mall is much more convenient? Functional?

I don't agree [pause] yeah it is. The mall is functional because you would get all that you want under one roof. Look at the type of outlets in the Sūq, first of all they are very specific in what they sell, and they cater for a certain segment of people, who are the low-income class people or for people who are looking for very [change in pitch/tone] specific things. For example, people who are looking to buy stationary, you would enter and find a stationary shop, that's it, that sells papers, pens ...etc. You'd find another shop that just sells sewing kits, for example, very specialized unique shops. You go to the mall, everything is under one roof, each shop has over 150-200 products. So, yes in terms of convenience a mall is better everything is under one roof, the parking is easy, no need to walk. But in terms of an experience, Sūqs are much better of an experience than a mall.

13) As a last question, if I ask you about your most enduring memory of a Sūq, what would it be?

The most enduring memory? [ahhh] One of the most enduring memories was going there with my father, I think, and him taking me through that old traditional Sūq and talking about how his childhood was and explaining to me what used to happen and what are the areas

there. He allowed me to envision how things were looking in that specific time; and I built from that a picture in my head, a memory of how things were, and he really made me ... again goosebumps [giggles]... feel that moment of how great that era and time was

Reminiscing about old times

People close to our thinking

Malls are more convenient

Malls have everything under one roof – Functional

Sūqs are merchandise-specific

Sūqs have unique shops

Malls have easy parking

Malls have A/C

versus now. He used to tell me that “I used to come and get a sandwich from here,” or “I used to buy the tea from there,” or “this is the shop where I used to ...” And you are suddenly in touch with history. That’s one of the unique moments I bonded with my father. One of the most unique moments.

Memories of father’s
childhood
Memory of a great era

Bonding with father

Appendix A.7

Interviews – Transcription (04) IA

- 1) Hello, thank you very much for accepting to conduct this interview with me today. This interview and its content are part of my PhD research on Arabian Sūqs. The purpose of the research is to better understand people's experience of traditional market streets, so do you agree for me to use your answers as part of this research and to include them in future publications?

Definitely, I do.

- 2) As confirmed in the Participant's Information Sheet and Consent Forms, your identity will remain anonymous. Since this is an interview concerning the meaning of Arabian Sūqs as experienced by Arabian communities, it is important to get a little information about your ethnic background. Allow me to ask you, do you consider yourself an Arab?

100% [big smile].

Where were you born/raised?

I was born in Tunisia in 1985, raised and born there, yeah.

- 3) So, how often do you visit traditional Arabian Sūqs, whether in Dubai or in any other places?

[emmm] because I am Tunisian, of course when I go there for vacation, I should go to the Sūqs or to the 'Old Medina' as we call it because that's us that's our culture and that's where we belong.

- 4) So, what do you mainly do there?

[emmm] it's a Sūq, so of course in Arabic Sūq means a market, so you buy traditional stuff, you buy the old stuff that you won't find anywhere else except in the Sūq. Specially in Tunis is having, how to say it, like different markets, different Sūqs so it's not only one. There is one called Sūq *al-Sabagheen*, where you will find material, different kinds of material. There is Sūq al-Bay, where you will find different metals. There is Sūq *el-Berkah*, which means Sūq of Gold, so any woman who wanna get married, it's kind of a tradition for us, she has to, it's a *Kutum*, it's a *habitude*, to go there to buy the gold because if she doesn't buy the gold from Sūq *el-Berkah*, somehow the marriage is not completed because that's part of the seven days that the woman should go through. And Sūq *el-Berkah* is the second day.

(4:1) So every day of the seven days, the Sūq has something to do in the marriage ritual?

Exactly. There is one day for Sūq *el-Berkah*, it's only for gold. The fourth day it's for Sūq *al-Dirah*, they call it *Bab el-Dirah*, because every

Researcher's Notes and Identification of Sub-themes

Sūqs are the essence of Arabian culture and tradition.

Sense of belonging

Old stuff.
Tradition



Figure A.7.1 – Top, Sūq of the Old Medina in Tunis. Bottom, Bride and friends wearing *Safsari* gowns in the Old Medina.

Sūq in Tunisia is called *bab*, means door for something. So, you have *Bab el-Dirah*, *Bab el-Bay*, *Bab el-Bahr*, means the door of the sea, there is no sea there it is just the name that has been given I think back in the Mowahideen [Almohad] Dynasty. That's actually the time when the old town was given the name of a Sūq, because back in the days it had a religious influence because of the mosque of al-Zaytouna and that's in the Middle Ages. So, it first had a religious and cultural meaning then it had an economical influence. So, people started to make it a market. And from that time until today it actually didn't change even the architecture, the monuments, you will find them from the Byzantine Empire and from the Roman Empire and it's very very very very old. So, till now we kept it as it is because it's our identity and we are proud of it and it shouldn't be touched by modernity and by the new businessmen and capitalism and all of this modernity stuff I would say. Back on our subject, yes, the woman should go through these seven days and everyday somehow, she has to go back to the Old Medina to experience a different way of the Sūq. So, as we said, the first day has to be at the house, where most of the women come. Of course, they wear this *Safsari*, a kind of 'abaya' with white colour that they have to buy as well from the Sūq because on the third day they have to go to the *hammam* wearing all of them this white material, it's in silk...

(4:2) The hammam is also in the Sūq?

In the Sūq in *Bab el-Dirah*. It's a very very big *hammam* that every woman in Tunisia has to go there to wash out, to make, you know, all the woman stuff before the marriage, with a group of women, of course they have to be relatives. Again, it's a kind of tradition. Only cousins and aunties, and she has to choose only one or two friends not more. Don't know why [giggling] but it has to be like this. So, she goes there to make the big stuff of the cleaning and washing and the *barquus*, which is the old kind of tattoo, we call it *barquus*. They draw some stuff on her body, it has a very nice smell because the product of this *barquus* has to be bought as well from the Sūq. It's a different market as well, they call it *Bab el-Benat*, which means door of young women. An old lady has to go there and buy the stuff to make the *barquus* for the spouse and make her ready for that day. I forgot to tell you something. This Old Medina that I am talking about is in the capital Tunis. But every single capital in Tunis [probably meaning every city] has its own Old Medina.

(4:3) So, it is not only one?

No, we have maybe six or seven, all of them they have walls. They built these walls during the Roman colonialization you know to protect the Medina because there was no Tunisia back in the days, there were these small towns surrounded by these walls. So, every single Old Medina, like Tunis the capital, in Mahdiya, Sus, Sfax, Gabes in the South. So, you won't get lost reaching there because once you see these walls you know, even if you are 30 km away, that this is the Old

Sūqs are the door to something?

Old town is the Sūq

Identity
Pride
Should not be touched by
modernity

Ceremonial spaces
Memories of marriage rituals
Nice smell – food, leather,
traditional materials

You won't get lost

The walls signal the Old
town, in others words the
Sūq.

Medina, which means the Sūq. Of course, there is no doors now, because we are not in these days anymore, but the gates are kept as it is.

5) So, when you go to the Sūqs, tell me do you have any preparations before you go visit there, something that you specifically wear, a gadget that you take with you, an accessory? Like, what are your preparations?

[emmm] Maybe before yes there were some preparation, because it's old and you have these old men who keep their shops there, so you have to wear this kind of 'abaya and stuff. It's a kind of respect for these old men. But now no not anymore, because we are more into a modern society, so you can wear anything, no need to cover yourself. But the adventure itself, everyone who is going to these Sūqs I think it's an experience because you have to stop in every single shop. Because you have this pure leather. You have this small [emmm] how to say it [emmm] '*les bibleaux*' [French for home accessories or souvenirs], you know. These kinds of products you won't find them anywhere else. The tourists when they come to Tunis, you know, apart from the sea and the restaurants and the lounges, that day for the Sūq it has to be there and believe me they stop at every single shop because every shop has its story. You will find that old man, still he is alive, and he will tell you "you know me 30 years and my grandpa 100 years ago," every shop has a story. You are talking about shops that exist from the mid-ages. So, yes, it's a heritage.

(5:1) So, you wear comfortable clothes?

Comfortable clothes, yes. Casual, yeah, and of course you have to wear comfortable shoes because you walk a lot on these tiny little small roads, you know. And people stick to each other, sometimes it's hot but now, you know, they made a kind of umbrella just to cover that little road because the sun is very hot in Tunisia especially during the summer and during the season when the tourists come to visit. So, they made it in a way to let people feel comfortable outside. But yeah, of course you won't go there with high heels because you will get tired and you need to walk a lot and you will have to visit the mosque, you know. [You have to dress up modestly] because it's still a mosque people pray inside. Tourists go inside to see the architecture, the monuments, it's inspired from which empire, who built it. All this kind of stuff you will find it there. And of course, the traditional food, you will find it there.

(5:2) You eat a lot of this traditional food there?

Oh yeah! It's cheap and it's traditional and it's popular and it's so tasty and it doesn't cost you anything. It's actually not a restaurant, you just grab and go, you know, it's on the go. We

Respect for elderly

Sūqs are an adventure,
an experience

Every shop has a story
Heritage

Casual
Comfortable
People sticking to each
other
Tiny little roads

Walk a lot
Architecture and
Monuments

have this *Bambaloni*, it's called *Bambaloni*, sorry for the name, it's Italian, just because we got from the Roman Empire and it stayed there. It's like a doughnut just with sugar, so I guess this is the oldest shop.

(5:3) You eat a lot of that?

Oh my God, it's so yummy.

(5:4) How does it smell like?

It smells like pastry. You know that smell of pastry.

(5:5) And you smell it on the roads?

Yeah of course, you know it's the smell of *Bambaloni* coming from the Sūq. You know it is fried in the oil and then you know they throw some kind of [emmm] *shobour* we call it, it's like this melted honey, and top of that some sugar. It's so yummy especially kids they love it.

6) So, do you usually go alone or with friends?

Of course, you enjoy more when you are with friends or if you have foreigner friends that are coming in for a visit you have to take them there cuz it's your pride. It's your pride, they have to see our history, I have to tell them about it. It is a kind of a pride for every Tunisian, I guess.

(6:1) What do you tell them?

About the history, when it was built, it's influenced by which empire, who made it, who built this mosque. Because before there were schools actually, people studied in the mosque, especially the Zaytouna mosque, In Tunis it's the oldest one and it was built I think in year 689.

(6:2) Do you think all Tunisians find pride in the ...?

100% definitely. Even my grandma, who was autodidact and she never been to school will tell you all of this. It is a pride even for the, sorry for the term, even for ignorant people they know this cuz you live the history. She lived the history [grandma], she has been there. When she wanna buy something, she goes there. When her daughter, who is my mom, wanted to get married, she took her there; the *hammam*, the Sūq, the material she buys, the *Jibaz*, I mean the [emmm] douane, everything is bought from there. Actually, we don't buy anything from outside.

(6:3) Not from the mall?

No no no no no. In Tunisia, malls, they exist of course but not for the marriage.

(6:4) Not for the big ceremony?

No no no, not for the big ceremony, not for any kind of ceremony, not for engagement, not for marriage, not for [emmm] nothing. Even the *tobour*, circumcision for the kids, everything has to be bought from the Sūq, the Medina.

7) Can you describe for me exactly, if I tell you to remember a day, and you describe to me from the morning, what you do?

Smell of food

Enjoyment with friends and family

Sūqs are our history and pride

Pride
Rituals of marriage

Sūqs are ceremonial spaces

Ok, so I am actually married to a Lebanese guy, who doesn't know about Tunisia. So, I remember the first day he has been to Tunis, so I had to take him, because as I told you it's my pride, so I had to take him to the Sūq. So, we woke up at 9 in the morning, because everything has to be inside the Medina. So, we went, and we had breakfast there. We have this little tiny coffee shop with traditional carpets, we sit on the floor cuz obviously there is no chair. There is *pouf*, we call it the *pouf*, it's a French name. You know most of the Tunisians they speak French on top of the Arabic. You sit almost 15cm on top of the floor, and the table is made by *nhass* [copper] and every single thing in that coffee shop has its own history; the chairs, the carpet, the curtains, everything is old. And when I tell you old, believe me, it very very very old and it's so beautiful. The colours - the red, the purple, the yellow – everything is there so it's that much different, but you see it beautiful. Because nowadays we are [emmm] slaves of the modernity but when you go to these kinds of places, you will see something old, you will see tradition, you will actually live the tradition, you become one of these old women back in the days. So, we had breakfast, as I told you. Something very traditional, we call it *shakshouka*, it's a kind of eggs mixed with tomato. Of course, the bread is made in the *tabouna*, it means old oven, on the floor.

(7:1) **They make it in front of you...**

Yes yes, everything is in front of you. And the juices, even the juice is made from the dates. They bring the dates from the South, and they make this kind of juice, it's called *tammour*, it means dates as it is in Arabic. After we finish this, of course he [the Lebanese husband] was amazed about how it is, even his family they were really amazed. After that of course we started the shopping, but it's not really shopping, because we are not really there to buy but [emmm] to see and to visit and to admire how the shops are done, how the Sūq of leather, *Sūq al-jild* it's called. When I say the street of leather, you will not find anything for example which is not leather like plastic or fake leather, no, it is only leather. Even the smell of leather, you know, you start to smell it even when you are far away, you know you are going through the leather market. He bought a wallet, he has it till now, and believe me I smell the leather till now [giggle]. We are actually married for four years.

Then we finished from the leather, we went to the silk market. As I told you, all these kinds of *'abaya*, we call it *safsari*, and it's white in colour; because in Tunisia we don't wear black as in the Middle East. We wear white because that's the colour of women, a woman should always be dressed in white somehow, it's like the wedding dress. So, she

Pride

Traditional coffee shops with traditional furnishings, tableware and colours

Beautiful

Living the tradition

Everything in front of you

Sūqs are not only to buy but to see and admire

Smell of products

White for women

has to be covered and you see only her eyes with *kohl*, it's the Arabic eyeliner, as well bought from the market. We have this market as well of the cosmetic and everything is traditional; the eyeliner is traditional, the face mask is traditional, very old material that they take, you know, from the land and it's super amazing. So, we spent a beautiful beautiful day. We have as well this traditional wear for the men, it's called the *jibba*, so it's more or less like the dress for women but it's made for men. During the seven days of marriage, as I told you before, there is this one day for the men only. So, he wears this kind of traditional *jibba* and *kabbous* [tarbush], I guess we got it from the Ottoman Empire, the red one. So, he wears the *jibba*, which is white in colour, with the *balgha*, a kind of slippers, with white socks and the *kabbous* on top of head. So, they spend this one day, day number six, only with his friends, guys only. No women are allowed inside, we kept this. Of course, the ceremony of the wedding is mixed, and drinks are offered, and Arabic sweets are offered. But everything before the ceremony is 100% traditional.

- 8) So, what do you like about walking in the alleys, like what do you see, is there anything very Tunisian or very specific to the Sūq in general?

Yes of course, the architecture. In Tunis, you won't find anything which is Tunisian 100%, because as I told you Tunis has been through different empires, we have the Roman empire, Almohad empire, we have the Byzantine empire, we have the Fatimid empire. So, all of this you will find it in the Sūq because every one of them left its prints. Until today, all the monuments have a history and identity of every single empire that Tunis went through.

- (8:1) What's your favourite? If I ask you about a favourite building that you go to see there?

[emmm, faint smile] Jami' al-Zaytouna. Oh my God, Jami' al-Zaytouna is Tunisia.

- (8:2) It's in the middle of the market?

It's in the middle of the town, all of Tunis. It's the biggest building, I think, because we don't have towers. You know, Tunisia is not Dubai. So, we kept things as it is. Al-Zaytouna is on top of a column [hill??], not a cliff but it's high; so of course, you will see it and it's at the end of *Shre' al-Qasbah*, which is al-Qasbah Street. It was given the name, the name changed actually, because now there is a municipality building called Municipality of al-Qasbah, and it was the first municipality that was built in Tunis. So, they changed the name of the street because of the municipality, because it is the oldest municipality in all of the Republic.

- 9) So, when you go there with your friends or family, do you usually only talk to your family and friends or you can talk to strangers?

You talk to strangers [affirmative tone]. I don't know why the atmosphere there is different, very sociable. You feel like we

Different influences in Sūq architecture

Vibrant, sociable and energetic atmosphere. Identity

Coffee shop Warmth

are in the old days; everybody loves each other; somehow people, which is very true, as if we are now again together. You have this feeling. This is our identification. You go to this coffee shop in Tunis, it's called *al-Shawasheen*, *al-Shawasheen* is like *al-Jibba* but it's for the winter. So, in the winter, people used to go this *Shawasheen Qahwa* [coffee shop] because it's winter and it's very cold; they have this little *cheminée*, we call it *kanoon* actually, where there is this little fire. So, people used to go there to feel warm, to have this nice tea, green tea of course, we don't have any other but this green tea. Now they call it Moroccan Tea, but actually it is not Moroccan, it is Maghrebi Tea. Because in Arabic Morocco now means *Maghrib* [from the West], so the name was lost, and we give the name Morocco to everything that is coming from the *Maghrib* [West]. So, people go there to feel warm. Till now *al-Shawasheen* is still the most famous coffee shop during the winter, and people go there and there is only tea. You can't have coffee there, not juice, only tea or water.

(9:1) And when you go there, you sit and talk to anyone there?

You talk to anyone because there are no tables, it's like a big table where everybody can join. Today, it's like three or four big tables, this big [hand gesture to simulate the size] huge, and you are seated with everyone, so 100% you will start communicating, talking and socializing. And once you sit, the waiter will start bringing tea, there is no menu, no nothing, you are there, everybody knows, you are there for the tea. So, he brings the tea, and of course in the very old traditional cups, because there are no other cups, they are made in *nbass* [copper]. It's an experience, it's lovely, actually you see when I am saying this I miss it, I wanna go there during the winter. And for some reason it is very warm.

(9:2) And in the streets, there are the vendors of course...

Of course, because the vendors are not vendors they are the owners of the shops. And as I told you, every vendor of them is having a story to tell you and he is happy to tell you about it. Especially, when he sees someone who is not Tunisian, he is so happy and of course if he is Arabic and non-Tunisian, as my husband, everyone starts talking to him: "come come let me tell you this," or "come come I will show you the picture of my descendants, my grandpa ...," and you will see old pictures ...

(9:3) So, it's loud?

Very loud, very loud.

(9:4) But happy?

Talk to everyone

Memory for the participant was very emotional – nostalgic.

Every vendor has a story to tell

Sūqs are loud

Happy atmosphere

History is priceless
The real value of things

Modernity everything has a price.

Malls are cold, isolated and individualistic.

Sūqs are warm and collective

Very happy. You see the vibes, you feel the vibes, you feel the energy, you feel the atmosphere. It's a very happy atmosphere.

(9:5) Because a lot of people think that Sūqs are for low-income or they are poor areas, and somehow people connect them to poverty, and I am just stating speculations, that people there would be unhappy. So, the Sūqs are not unhappy?

The Sūqs are very happy. You know anything which has a price is cheap. These shops and these small houses do not have a price, because you won't give a price to something classic, because classic comes from classy from beautiful, from very expensive, the real value of things. It's your heritage, it's your history and your history doesn't have a price. So of course, it's not a shop in Dubai Mall and it costs a billion, no it's a little tiny shop inside the Sūq. I won't call it poor, no no no no, it's very rich. Another thing that maybe rich people don't understand, it's your history and history doesn't have a price [tag].

10) You were talking about Dubai Mall, so if I tell you what is the difference between the Mall and the Sūq?

I won't compare. 100% I won't compare. Mall, modernity, everything has a price, people don't know each other, it's very cold, it's very isolated, it's very individual. You need something, you go grab-and-go. No, the Sūq is a story. Every day is a new day, every vendor is your father, your grandfather. Everybody is your brother. Very woman you see in the street going to buy stuff for her daughter for her wedding is somehow your mother or your grandmother. Of course, Dubai is great, you know, the revolution of modernity is a big wow, the towers, but it has nothing to do with what I am talking about. Maybe they are richer for sure, 100%, but [emmm] history for me doesn't have a price.

11) You told me about your husband, but is there any other memory that sticks in your mind about the Sūq? It could be pleasant or unpleasant, but an experience you had, a little story, is there a little event that happened, and you cannot get it out of your head?

Of course, yes. I will tell you something very personal. You know, my university, I was studying French literature in Tunis, which is as well the oldest university in Tunis. It was built I think during the French colonialization. So, for some reason, if you have to go this university, you have to cross all the Sūq to get there. So, I take the metro in the early morning, I cross the street and the shops are still not opened, and of course after I finish, I have to cross again all of the Qasbah street to reach the metro station. In Tunisia, during the winter it starts to get dark at 7, I finish almost 6:30. After having a coffee with my friends and stuff [smile], it's almost dark and I have to go through all of the

Happy Vibes

Modernity is cheap
History is priceless
Everybody is your brother,
mother or father.

Sūq. But my father was always concerned about my safety and used to say, “be careful and be careful,” and for some reason he told me to take a taxi to get you to the metro station. That day, I couldn’t find any taxi and I said ok I don’t have any other option and all the taxis are changing the shift and didn’t stop, so I cross the Sūq again when it’s really dark. So, I was really scared, you know, I am a little girl. So, I reached al-Zaytouna mosque, because you know from the other side it starts with al-Zaytouna, but if you start from the metro you come from al-Qasbah. I remember this very well. There were two guys who approached me, and I was very scared, and were like “where are you going?” and I told him “you don’t talk to me I don’t know you.” He was like “no, no, no you tell me where you are going?” I told him “I want to reach the metro station.” He asked me “why are you scared?” I answered him “I am scared because I am alone.” He was like “you are in the old Medina, it is such a shame that you feel scared and there are men here. We are gonna take you all the way to the metro station and every day, here is my number, if you feel you are alone or scared from anyone you just call me, and I am gonna pick you up from your university and cross all of the Qasbah street to the metro station.” These two guys, who are very handsome [giggle] took me all the way to the metro station. So, when I reached home, my father asked me if I took a taxi, and I said “no, no, no, no, I don’t know why you tell me to take a taxi. Actually, from today I am gonna cross the whole Medina to get to the metro station because there are still good men in Tunisia.” I think for some reason, they all belong to the old town. It’s true, they never chase you around and they never look at you with bad looks, never, never, never. You feel they are real men, because they grew up like that, it’s their pride.

The Old Medina has real men, so women should not be scared there. It’s their pride to protect the women.

Appendix A.8

Interviews – Transcription (05) SN

Observation. When I was in Cairo earlier this October 2018, I decided to visit the heavily crowded Sūq of *Khan al-Khalili*, which is only one small street in the city's larger traditional Sūq. There, I had several encounters with different people and places. When I first reached the area, chaperoned by my cousin, the taxi driver stopped at the mouth of one of the district's smaller alleys, informing us that he can no longer proceed because the street is too narrow for vehicular passage. So, we took a short walk through the old alley, which was too small to accommodate a car and two people crossing side by side. I had to squeeze my small body between a parked car and a food cart before tripping over the sidewalk, which was itself occupied by few plastic chairs that serve as sitting stations for the tiny coffee shops lining the alley. As I was watching my cousin's large belly fighting to move between the same tiny space I just crossed, I asked the food cart vendor, who held my hand right before I felt completely on the floor, why is he parking his cart here while there are no people in the area. He told me that he was waiting for the Friday prayer to finish, in order to start preparing food and drinks. Having completely forgotten that it is actually Friday, I suddenly realized why the streets seem less crowded than I remember them to have always been. We greeted the vendor and moved across the alley to reach the newly renovated district of al-Moez Street with its grand mosque (Barqooq), gates and relatively large shops. The street itself was wide and opened up onto some gated complexes, which flanked both sides of the street. Few young people were sitting along the street's passage watching passers-by, talking and munching on nuts and grilled corn cubs. A liquoric juice vendor strolled along with his traditional clothing and portable juice tank and offered us a drink. My cousin drank a glass, tipped the vendor and asked him about the right way to reach the Khan. A nearby shop owner, who was just opening his shop and displaying his brass products outside, heard my cousin's question and readily volunteered to explain that we need to go left and walk across the main street. He further asked us to look at his products, emphasizing that we will not find anything different in the Khan. My cousin thanked him and told him that we are here to see Old Cairo. While I was peeking through the gated complex of Sultan Qalawun, a neatly dressed man, who was watching us and listening to our conversations, stopped me and said, if I wish to see the real treasures of old Cairo I need to walk through the smaller alleyways, which too lead to the Khan. I asked him if he works at any of the

Researcher's Notes and Identification of Sub-themes

Friday Prayer, Mosque, empty street.

The Street as a social space.

Vendors eavesdropping on people's conversations.

Diminishing social barriers.

The alleys have the treasures.

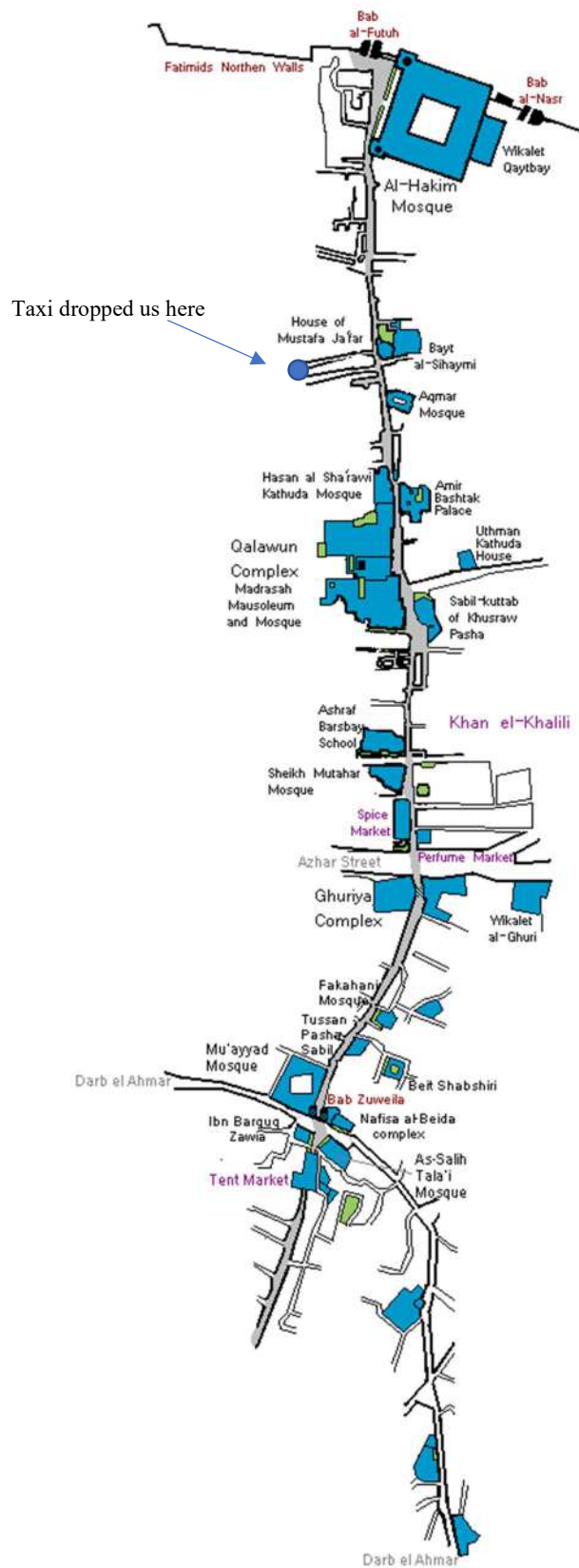


Figure A.8.1 – Urban Map of *al-Moez Street*, showing the location of *Aqmar Mosque*, *Qawlun Complex* and *Khan al-Khalili*.



Figure A.8.2 – Traditional Liquorice juice vendor in *Khan al-Khalili*.

shops, he informed me that he is an Egyptian-American architect and that he owns an established architectural practice, with branches in Cairo, Alexandria, Riyadh, Boston and Dubai. When I asked him about the reasons for visiting the Sūq today, he told me that he was praying in the big mosque. I took this opportunity and explained to him my research proposal and he agreed to participate, noting that he is pressed for time and cannot do it immediately. So, we agreed to meet a few days in Dubai.

- 1) I know you are busy and don't have much time to spare, so I will go directly discussing the subject that I wanted to interview you about and that's the difference between the Sūq and a mall. Again, thank you for your time and I know you've read the Participants' Consent Form, so can we pick up our discussion about the Sūq?

Ok, [brief Arabic statements then he asked me if I prefer him to speak in English] ... so we were talking about Foster and his modern interpretation of the Arabic Sūq in his design of Abu Dhabi's Central Market. That is something definitely worth visiting... when the building opened up, I have seen some images of it and I wanted to go and see it. One of the main problems of it is that it is multi-story, then you have what to do with levels and how to make different levels work... He used some very nice motifs, some patterns that were beautifully done and detailing that was also very

Sūqs are not multi-levelled.

beautifully done. But because he wanted to experiment with the idea of the Sūq... [short pause] the idea of the Sūq is the street itself, the street itself is the market not the shop. So, the street itself you should have people putting their product in the street...

(1:1) Not out...

It's in the street. The street is a pedestrian movement, even if it not a pedestrian street, like in Cairo, people are selling in the street. But that meant that the shops [in Foster's mall] themselves either had some very small openings but no one in these shops is gonna take his products out in the morning and take them back inside at night, it's not gonna happen. So, the relationship between the interior of the shop and the walkway, which is the Sūq, did not happen. So as a result, you have closed the walkway, because to enter the shop you need to enter the door then shop... so it's not working because there was no more an activation of the passage itself. It's a disaster, but I like the architecture outside, but how he resolved it, it's terrible... it did not work, and you can see because it was empty, and it will never activate. I knew later that they were renovating it and I knew that they were having these beautifully done *mashrabeyas* in a modern way and that there were getting rid of them. Someone picked them all up and used them somewhere else. It meant that what they did with it is very important to see how they changed it and if it is working now or not, I am not sure, and comparing it to what it was before. You need to get some records or photos and compare both because it might be a very good case study to look at.

- 2) You mentioned something about the storeys and the verticality... so you mean that the verticality of the mall does not work well with the horizontality of the passage, you think that Sūqs work better on ground level?

Most Sūqs are on ground level, I am not sure if some cases had double heights, maybe there is... when you go for example to places like Khan al-Khalili you go to certain areas up, but either they are cafes or residences for the people. Yet, another good example actually is *al-Wekalah*, *Wekalat al-Ghouri* [near Khan al-Khalili] is a very good example of a mall. That is the mall, where you have shops and artisans living there. There you go up. Have you been there?

(2:1) Not really inside...

You must go there, because that is multi-level. You have shops below, but you can still go up and walk up and go into the artisans' workshops. So, there is this kind of levelling. But it is not the Sūq per say, but another model of it. But the

The Sūq is the street. Diminishing physical barriers, putting products outside, selling outside, walking outside.

Relationship between exterior and interior.

Activation of the passage.

An important observation, where al-Wekalah becomes similar to Qaiçaria

Extension of the shops into the public realm.



Figure A.8.3 – Interior of Foster's Central Market of Abu Dhabi.

lower part always opens up, and the shops extend in the street or in the public realm, whatever that is. So, when you have an idea of a shop that is here in malls, like the example of Foster's Central Market, where the shop is an individual cell and you don't extend outside then it does not work.

3) How about the extremities, where does the path of the mall go from?

What do you mean?

(3:1) I mean in the Sūq for example it starts from a point, whether it's a square, a mosque or some building, and then extends to another point ...

Yes, yes, yes...

(3:2) So does this make a difference?

Of course, the Sūq has always been related to the mosque because people go to the mosque on Friday for sure, so there are lots of people coming out and even when you don't find shops now, always after Friday prayer people are selling stuff outside, not in Dubai but definitely in Egypt and in Saudi you find people selling anything outside the mosque. Because you finish [praying] then you wanna go

Relationship between traditional Sūq and mosque.



Figure A.8.4 – *Wekalet al-Ghuri*, Cairo.

and buy few things. So, the presence of the Sūq has a very strong relationship to the mosque because Muslims have to go to the mosque five times a day, so on your way you might want to pick up some bread, some cheese, whatever you wanna pick up, for the family back at home. So, there will always be something that you will be seeing or buying on your way to and from the mosque. Now the presence of a mosque as a beginning of the Sūq or an access to it is being replaced by the anchor store in the mall. So, you have something that you wanna end up to or start from, these are the two anchor points that you end up with in the mall. So, it is no longer the mosque, which was an important pivot in the Sūq, meaning from mosque to home.

- 4) So, in your opinion, we understand that the mall is more functional, it has more amenities. But for the Arab world, does the mall negate the need for a Sūq?

[emmm] no one said that... Again, another example that pop up in my head, which probably you are familiar with is *Madinat Jumeirah*, which is an example of an A/C'ed traditional Sūq. Now it works a bit better than Foster's Central Market because the shops had bigger openings and they allowed people to sit out ... like Baskin Robbins [American ice cream franchise] ... I also remember they have places like Gallery One, selling posters and artworks outside. So, the passage is occupied, and it is air conditioned, so it is within a covered weather that people can enjoy. In many ways it is successful. It might be ... the architectural style is fake... the problem is that you find a lot of people thinking that it is

Relationship of Mall to anchor stores replaces the mosque/ Sūq relationship.

Occupation of the passage means social interaction.

Dubai malls are fake-of-the-authentic.



Figure A.8.5 – Madinat Jumeirah, Dubai.

the Old Dubai, thinking that this is authentic architecture... You know it is fake of the authentic... that is another challenge that you are dealing with... [long pause]

(4:1) A redefinition of the Old?

Yes, a redefinition of the old, but people tend to think it is the Old. It is fake. It is like when you make a Disney space and you think that this is the space of the city, the Main Street. It's not Main Street, but it is a fake main street. That I guess is similar. Other good examples now... if you look at what MERAAS [governmental Dubai-based land development entity] did ...

(4:2) You mean City Walk [an urban development project in Dubai]?

Not only City Walk, there is a series of them. There is City Walk 1, then comes The Walk, which was followed by City Walk 2, and then La Mer. There is also a very good one near *al-Khor*, or the Creek. Box Park too is an outside walk, but it misses that it does not have another side, so it's a strip mall and there is a big road next to it, so you don't get the continuity of walking right and left and seeing the products. So, it's kind of half. City Walk 1 the same, it was intended as an external Walk. Then you also have The Beach, where you have two sides, one side facing JBR and the shops, then you have the beach in front on them ... The space in-between became services...

(4:3) And it is narrow...

And it is narrow, but it was never really intended for services, because it was meant to be the walk. Do you understand what I am saying? So, you either walk on the beach or you walk near JBR and the in-between which was supposed to be a very vibrant area ended up being the services. That was better done in City Walk 2, because now

Suq is continuity of an experience, suggesting narrow streets occupied on both sides by buildings/shops, and the middle passageway is activated by the interaction between the inside of the buildings and the outside where people are walking.



Figure A.8.6 – Top, *The Beach*, JBR, Dubai.
Bottom, *La Mer*, Dubai.

you have both sides and they came up with another idea, that is the inner walk when it is hot that you go inside, but I don't think that is working very well, because people tend to use the street better.

(4:4) I agree, but don't you think that the architectural articulation there is a little too....

No, I am saying the idea of an outdoor pathway...

(4:5) So, we are discussing the idea that the Sūq is the outdoor pathway?

Yeah, it can be covered like in *Sūq Hamidiya* [Damascus] that is covered. But still it is always an outdoor street. It is different than *al-Wekalah*, if you want to think of it as the old mall. But the Sūq is more of the outdoor street. So, if I am taking the examples of what Dubai has, and they are all very similar, they are successful... From Box Park to The Beach to The Walk to City Walk 2 and recently La Mer. It might be tacky [La Mer], that's another thing, it's touristic, it's commercial, but La Mer is nice as spaces in-between, meaning you have spaces on the beach, but you go in between, so it's workable.

(4:6) the in-between, can you elaborate?

Meaning it is much better than The Beach, which is very linear. I think maybe we can stop here, and we can talk about them some other time. But I think another failure example is also the one on the Creek, I forgot the name [he meant *al-Seej*]. It is also by MERAAS, they did two parts of it, one is new, very similar to City Walk, almost a copy. The other one is very traditional almost like *Bastakia*. Again, it is a typical interpretation, unlike Foster's modern interpretation, when you see it you think it is old. But I don't think it will ever work, again because they are dealing with it as if they are small openings. So, recreating that exactly also would fail. This is still opening up, some phases of it, but my critique of it is that it will never work. So, there are a lot of cases that are playing with the idea of the Sūq as an outside place, or as an indoor mall and all of them have their own challenges or their own problems.

- 5) Don't you think that most of the examples that we discussed in Dubai are also always playing around with the idea of a restaurant or a series of restaurants, in other words you have to end up eating somewhere?

[Sigh] That is another problem, now you are talking about what to do with these places....

(5:1) I mean don't you think that these places to some extent recreate our ideas of the *Qahwa* (coffee shop)?

Of course, but you know one of the problems that we are also dealing with here is that one of them [of these malls] would be enough for Dubai, two not five not even three malls. So eventually... how many Zara's do you need? [laughing] you probably need six... what I mean is that at the end you have Zara here, Zara here and Zara there... You don't need all of them... maybe people go to the malls to have coffee of something or to have good meal to eat because again I am not going to buy from all of them. They are all

The space in-between.

The literal replication of past references would fail because they don't consider modern-day realities.

Dubai has too many malls that are competing with each other.



Figure A.8.7 – *Al-Seef*,
Dubai Creek.

competing with each other, that's is the problem with Dubai. So, the idea of one part of it being F&B that is definitely similar.

(5:2) So, you don't think they are recreating anything, they are just filling up the spaces in these malls.

There is another guy that you would probably want to meet, his name is Kareem Atiyaat. He was the commercial consultant for MERAAS and now he owns his own company. He does the mixing for them, I mean for the malls. So, he tells you what to do and what to put... he does that. He would give you more inside information not from an architectural point of view but from a commercial one, so he would tell you why and the trends of it.

6) So, in general, do you like traditional Sūqs better or malls? I mean in terms of personal preference.

Of course, traditional Sūqs.

(6:1) Why?

They are more authentic, they have life. So, there are traditional Sūqs like *Khan al-Khalili* or *al-Moez* Street, they are not touristic, they are traditional, just beautiful. Because they naturally came out and it works superb. Walking there is a very lovely experience, walking to other Sūqs whether it is a vegetable market or a fish market, meaning not the historical, also creates another experience that enriches you. Let's talk about another example. You told me you have been to Georgia lately, there is this area where the clock is, it is beautiful. Why is it beautiful? Because you get the architecture, you get the spilling out into the street. See, most of the places there are eating spaces with some other shops for artwork. Behind this street there is also another small street that is very beautiful. I would rather be walking in these

Walking in the Sūq is an experience.

Spilling out into the street.

Malls are more convenient and easier to navigate but do not stimulate.

streets that going to any mall. I go to the mall and I am not stimulated. There is the convenience of it, of course, easy to go... again some malls work better than others, architecturally, also diagrammatically. We can talk about malls which ones work better than others... but Sūqs definitely have much more to offer than a regular mall. Now, is it the history, is it the life...?

(6:2) You mean the everyday life?

See if you tell somebody who lives in a very traditional area, he will think of it in a very functional way, he needs to get his food, he needs to work so I am going to the Sūq. But if you are an architect and you are looking at it as a cultural exchange or social exchange, yes of course, you talk to people, you meet people... Now, how much of that you can maintain when you have shopping online, that is another dimension. Maybe that is why also you have more food areas, you need that, maybe, I am not sure, you need more F&B because you are gonna go and not buy because I can shop online. So, I am gonna go out and eat and socialize, I am thinking out loud as we speak.

(6:3) Last question to this very interesting comment, so you think when online shopping hits, malls are suffering right now, that Sūqs would suffer the same way the malls are?

Definitely Sūqs have already suffered. Would they have a comeback? Yes maybe. From what I am hearing is that some of the Sūqs in Dubai used to be very vibrant. When we first came to Dubai 18-19 years ago, we went there a couple of times and it was very nice, as an experience, I mean walking and bargaining. From what I understand is that there was a lot of money from Dubai was in the Sūq, but the large malls kind of hit them. So, the question is do we need of these super malls? I am not sure. Maybe there is a chance to go back and revive these outdoor streets for their experience. So, going back to all the examples we discussed, those that MERAAS did, are all fake, nothing is left to nature.

(6:4) You mean the natural development of things...

Yes, you do this then people do that... Now they are all controlled. But the old Sūqs were all natural, including the ones in Dubai, but somehow, they dried out. So, would it be interesting to go and revive those? Also, some other parts which are very interesting, like if you look at the Art District. It is all warehouses that have been transformed into shopping areas then artists came to do graffiti and artwork on them and it became a very lovely area. But these were stand-alone buildings and actual walking areas that got revived not as one project but as pieces. Yet, we have to admit that the beauty of the Sūq is that it naturally grows, did not just happen as one go... it expands on it. So, now when you make it all as one project and you mimic the nature of the Sūq, sometimes it works but many others it doesn't. You need the input of the people. I think that is also important.

Thank you very much for the great information and for your time.

Challenges of the Sūq and the mall in the age of online shopping.

Walking and bargaining in the Sūq is a nice experience.

Malls are all controlled. Sūq naturally grow out of social and cultural exchange.

Appendix A.9

Interviews – Transcription (06) AA

Observation. The walk-through Egypt's *Khan al-Khalili* is pretty impressive and the experience is both enriching and entertaining. For, despite the heat, compactness of the streets and the excessiveness of the crowd, the street boasts with sensory vibrancy, with a versatility of products on display, architectural details to scrutinize and many people to meet. My walk itself encompassed several activities: looking at accessories, scarfs, souvenirs and even toys for my son; bargaining with vendors for a cut off in their prices; taking photographs and asking about directions to *al-Fishawi* coffee shop. On our way to *al-Fishawi*, I smelled a very familiar aroma, and I suddenly remembered the incense that my grandmother used to burn every Friday after the payer. I went into the first incense shop and I asked the sales lady if she had any traditional Egyptian incense. She looked at me with a little doubt and pointed at the baskets of different aromatic powders displayed outside on the sidewalk. I started sniffing through the different powders, trying my best to locate my grandmother's old formula. Then it hit me, so I asked her if she has traditional "Mastique" (لبان دكر), "Blue Salt" (ملح أزرق) and "Eye of the Devil" (عين العفريت). The lady laughed and asked me where I know these names from, exclaiming "only old women know about these ingredients!" So, I told her about my childhood memories at my grandmother's house. She went inside the tiny shop, opened few drawers, mixed some ingredients and handed a bag to me. The bag smelled Old. I smiled, paid and left the shop. My cousin, who was waiting for me outside, had a similar nostalgic smile on his face once we opened the bag and sniffed through the familiar red and blue powder mixture. As we started heading towards the coffee shop, the owner of a nearby shop, who was eavesdropping on our conversation with the lady next door, stopped us and asked, "why are you still using this formula it is very old, I have a trendier and better one." We both smiled at him and walked away without answering.

On our way to *al-Fishawi* I realized it was almost impossible to interview any of the vendors around, because they were either busy hunting for new customers—hence uninterested in my academic pursuit—or they are setting up

Researcher's Notes and Identification of Sub-themes

Sensory Excess
Bargaining, looking,
smelling, buying,
walking.

Memory.

Vendors'
eavesdropping.



Figure A.9.1 – Left, *Al-Fishawi* Coffee Shop. Right, small Brass table or *taqtouqa*, *Khan al-Khalili*, Cairo. By author.

their stalls outside. So, I decided to probe as many vendors as possible to talk to me, either by buying small items or pretending to bargain for better prices along the way. Doing so, the vendors started telling me briefly about the market status after the revolution and terrorist attacks, the new taxes they must pay for their stalls, the declining number of tourists and how most of the people visiting the Khan lately are mostly Gulf Arabs. This somehow explained the rather inflated prices they asked for their products, including the beautiful necklace I bought off one of the street stalls. Once we reached *al-Fishawi*, we sat on one of the small brass tables lining the tiny alley and ordered something to drink. The coffee shop itself had a bigger indoor space right behind us, guarded with two grand wooden doors that were embellished with an antique brass plaque, on which the name of the place was beautifully inscribed in Arabic calligraphy. I kept scrutinizing the doors' beautiful details, gazing up at the *mashrabeya* windows above us, while my cousin was enjoying his cold hibiscus that was served first. Shortly after, the waiter showed up from inside the coffee shop with a tray that was lined with over seven tiny tin tea pots and he started distributing them on the small tables one after the other. I poured my tea into the glass, then I placed few fresh mint leaves inside. Throughout this time, the mobile vendors did not stop coming to our table, asking if we wished to buy souvenirs, personalized mugs, accessories and socks. Few shoe cleaners also passed by to offer their services, ignoring that my white sneakers and my cousin's flip flops lie beyond their expertise. Aside from the constant invasion of vendors, the almost mechanic movement of waiters, the dizzying smoke of shisha everywhere, there was nothing unusual in *al-Fishawi*. It is still crowded and loud, it still harbours the same fights between vendors, some of whom do not belong to the

Mobile vendors intruding and fighting.

alley, the same clashing noises of backgammon that are mixed with the sounds of spoons stirring sugar into the tea glasses. I looked in front of me towards the benches lining the opposite side of the alley, less than a meter and a half away from me, and I noticed an eccentrically looking tourist, who was sitting alone on the bench, crossing his bare feet up while his black flip flops lie on the floor beneath him, sipping on his tea and puffing the smoke of his shisha out above. The man looked foreign and he was wearing a neat white linen shirt and black cargo trousers. He had blond hair and a thick beard. He seemed completely uninterested in the place, ignoring everyone who approached him, whether vendors of waiters. He kept looking at his mobile and almost never looked around. I was intrigued by this man's attire and I asked my cousin to speak with him and check if he would be interested in an interview. It turned out he was not a tourist and that he was Egyptian who dislikes Sūqs. Intrigued to get a better understanding of his point of view, I moved across and explained my project. He agreed to participate since he had nothing until his friend finishes her shopping.

- 1) Hello, thank you very much for accepting to conduct this interview with me today. This interview and its content are part of my PhD research on Arabian Sūqs. The purpose... of the research is to better understand people's experience of traditional market streets. So, do you agree for me to use your answers as part of this research and to include them in future publications?

Yes, I do.

- 2) As confirmed in the participant's information sheet and consent forms, your identity will remain anonymous... since this is an interview concerning the meaning of Arabian Sūqs as experience by Arabian communities it is important to get a little information about your ethnic background. Do you consider yourself an Arab?

Yes

(2:1) Where were you born? Raised?

Cairo, Egypt.

- 3) Ok. How often do you visit traditional Arabian Sūqs, whether in Dubai or in any other city?

[No answer]

(3:1) Do you often visit Sūqs or no?

No. I have been like three four times.

(3:2) Three four times, and that was in Cairo?

It was in Cairo.

- (3:3) Did you go to any other Arabian Sūq in any other Arabic city?
[Pause] No.
- 4) Ok, so when you visited traditional Sūq in Cairo, um... what do you mainly do there? [Pause] or what do you actually go to do there?
um... shopping and eating.
(4:1) What do you shop for?
[Pause] mmm... old stuff.
(4:2) Old stuff?
Yes. [Pause] or jewellery, or carpet.
(4:3) So, by old do you mean antique or you mean they are old style?
Antique.
(4:4) Do you usually find a lot of antiques in the old Sūqs of Cairo?
Yes.
(4:5) Emmm... are they expensive?
[Pause] if they are original, yes, they are expensive.
(4:6) Do you mean there are also fakes or replicas?
[Pause] I don't know.
- 5) You don't know. Um... ok so do you generally like going to....
No.
(5:1) Why you don't like?
It's not, it's not my favourite place.
(5:2) Why do you think it's not your favourite place?
Cuz it's very crowded, it's very hard to reach. Uh [Pause] it is not clean.
(5:3) It is not clean?
Yes.
(5:4) Clean in what sense?
Dusty, dirty streets, dirty uh [pause] dirty floors.
(5:5) So, do you usually, that's how you describe the Sūqs of Cairo, since you did not go any other Sūq?
Yes.
(5:6) So, in Cairo you think the streets are dirty, you think they are not clean, crowded?
And the old Sūqs.
(5:7) [Pause] there was not one particular part of the old Sūq that you find...more interesting than others?
[Pause] no, more or less they are all the same.
- 6) They are all the same. Can you describe them to me, a little bit? The same in what way?
[Breathes heavily in boredom] They look alike, they are all very narrow... emmm... alleys and very crowded, very loud voices everywhere. Small shops.
(6:1) And the display in the shops is not nice? You don't like it?
No, the display is ok.
(6:2) What do they usually display out there? Like you said you go to shop for antiques and gold, so what is the display like of the antiques and gold? [Pause] Is it very glittery, is it dim, is it luxurious, is it.

Old Stuff.

Very Crowded
Very hard to reach.
Dirty.

They are all the same.

Narrow streets, very loud and very crowded.

Yea some of them are very glittery, especially the jewelleries and the emmm... it depends, it depends on what they are selling.

(6:3) But in general, you still don't like the way they are displayed, or do you find something to your liking?

[Pause] I don't like it in general, I don't like the place. Sometimes you can find interesting uh... stuff.

- 7) So, when you go to the Sūq when you've been to those Sūqs those three four times uh did you have to do any preparations before you go whether they are physical or mental?

No, no. I just go.

(7:1) You just go there... [small giggle] ok and you don't have emmm... the way you dress up, is there anything in specific that you wear?

No. As a man no.

(7:2) As a man no. Do you think a preparation for a man going to the Sūq would differ from the preparation of a woman going to the Sūq?

It depends on... on the woman herself.

(7:3) Like what do you think a woman going to the Sūq should wear? Or what do you see there?

In Cairo she has to be emmm... (محتشمة يعني ايه؟) [what does *mohtashema* means?].

(7:4) Covered?

Yes.

(7:5) Why do you think she needs to be covered?

Because people may [uh] annoy her.

(7:6) Annoy her in what way?

Annoy her, like (يعاكسوها يعني)

(7:7) You mean they make passes at her?

[Nodding in agreement]

(7:8) But you in specific when you go with the other people, you think you need to dress up for the occasion ...

No.

(7:9) What do you wear? Formal? Casual?

Casual, very casual. Why do I have to wear formal in a dirty place?

(7:10) [Laugh] so you think because the place is dirty you don't want to dress up?

Why do I have to dress up? I am going for shopping.

(7:11) So, when you are going to a regular mall do you dress up?

I wear casual as well.

(7:12) So, you think shopping requires from you to be casual? Yes, to feel comfortable.

Women's dress code – maybe only in Cairo?

Harassment in Cairo Sūqs.

Casual place, *possibly also shopping requires casual-ness?*

Sūqs are dirty places.

Need for comfort while shopping.

- 8) When you used to go there, did you use to go alone or with friends?

With friends or family.

(8:1) Did your friends or family enjoy going there?

Some of them, my mom used to enjoy going there.

(8:2) Your mother used to enjoy going there. Did she used to go a lot?

Yes, to buy jewellery.

(8:3) Are there no other places that would sell better jewellery other than the Sūq? Or do you think that there was something very specific in the Sūq that she went for?

Not something, maybe it's the people who are selling they have their own shops there.

(8:4) You mean that she used to go to specific place?

Yes, specific guys.

(8:5) Ok, so why did she used to go to those specific guys, is it because they are artistic, they have something different or because they are lower prices?

Emmm... I think they are more professional in this job.

(8:6) In what way are they professional?

I think... you can say they are the source of the manufacturers of jewellery.

(8:7) Is there something different about that jewellery?

No, it is the same product that you can find anywhere else, but it is in bigger quantities and ... it is the source.

- 9) Ok, can you describe in some detail those activities that you do in the Sūq... If I ask you to describe one of those visits, what would be the order of things that you do?

We used to park the car very far...

(9:1) Early morning or...

Early morning the shops will be closed, you have to go after 10 or 11.

(9:2) So, you used to park the car far ...

Very far [assertive tone] ... because it is a very crowded area. You cannot find a parking and there is no dedicated parking for this place.

(9:3) And this is one of the things that you don't like about the place?

Yes, for sure no one likes to park their car very far. Then we go to the shops directly. Then maybe after a couple of hours if we feel hungry or thirsty, we sit somewhere to have a drink or to eat.

(9:4) Is there a specific restaurant that you used to go there to eat or drink?

Yes, I used to go to an Egyptian restaurant where they serve grilled food. Grilled meat and grilled chicken.

(9:5) So, you go to that specific restaurant not any other?

It was the best actually, that's why we used to go there.

(9:6) So, you knew the place of the restaurant and you used to go directly there?

Sūq merchants are more professional in their hand work

Bigger quantities of merchandise.

Sūqs have no parking..

It's a famous restaurant, everyone knows it.

(9:7) What is it called?

[Pause remembering] ... *al-Dahhan*.

(9:8) So, you know the restaurant and once you feel hungry you go there directly?

Yes, but you need to find your way.

(9:9) Do you think if anyone did not know the place of the restaurant, would they be able to find it directly?

He needs to ask so many times until he reaches the restaurant.

(9:10) You don't think they would be a way to find it by the smell for example?

It depends if you are far from it then you will never know where it is, but if you are close then yes you can... but it's hard.

(9:11) It's hard...

Yes, very hard, especially that it is not an outdoors restaurant, its indoors.

(9:12) Is it hidden? Is that what you mean that it is hidden in one of the small alleys?

No no, it is not hidden, it is indoors.

10) So, can you describe to me how the food is served in that restaurant?

It is a very normal restaurant, very small, because all the shops there are small. It is like 15-20 tables and they serve the food very normal. There is nothing different.

(10:1) Nothing different in the taste of the food?

No no no. You can eat the same food anywhere else.

(10:2) Not in the service?

The service is a little bit cheaper than other 4- or 5-stars restaurants. But the food is the same.

(10:3) And the place and the cutlery?

It's clean, it doesn't look very nice, but it is very normal. The tables are covered with this white and red cloth, it's a very standard restaurant.

(10:4) So, there is nothing typical about this place?

No in this specific place there is nothing typical. See I like to go to nice and clean shops, so maybe there are other shops, which are not very clean, maybe the tourists like to try them, but as a local I don't.

11) After you finish with the restaurant where do you usually go?

We can go have tea in one of the cafes located there.

(11:1) Is there a specific café that you go to?

The traditional one there is called *al-Fishawi* Café, it is very known in this place and everyone visiting this area they have to stop there to have tea or coffee or if they want to play backgammon or chess they used to have like small tables there, and if you like to smoke shisha you can try there as

You need to find your way.

You need to ask for directions.

Very small shops.

Same food as any restaurant.

Signature Coffee Shop

well. It is located at the entrance of the whole Sūq, so it is very very famous there.

(11:2) What is also there at the entrance of the Sūq?

There are other shops.

(11:3) Is there any other landmark at the opening of the space? It is an open area or ...

It is a big space overlooking the main plaza, the main square, and there is a big mosque located there.

(11:4) There is a big mosque there in front of the *Fishawi*. ... So people go sit there in front of the mosque and the plaza and then there are the alleys?

Yes.

(11:5) So, there are tables in this Café?

Very small metal tables, it's the traditional table in local Egyptian coffee shops, it's called '*taqtonqa*,' and yeah, they put the drinks on top of these tables and there are some bigger tables if you like to play chess or backgammon. That's it.

(11:6) Is it crowded there, is it loud?

Yes, it is crowded there and it's loud.

12) What happens there when you are sitting having this drink with your friends, do you usually only talk to your friends or family? Or would you also be talking to strangers around you?

No, people are not very friendly in these places... especially if you are a local you don't have to. Maybe the tourists like to explore then maybe they talk to the local guys there but for a local man there is no need to talk to a stranger.

(12:1) You don't feel the need?

No, there is no extra information I will get... I know everything here this is my country.

(12:2) So, when you are sitting there, no one will come and approach or talk to you at all. Not even a vendor?

The vendors will come, to clean shoes for example or to sell any of their products like emmm... souvenirs for tourists [pause] that's it.

(12:3) There is nothing like displayed on the walls?

Music, the traditional Egyptian music and they put some TV's if there is a game, so people can watch there, but this is not the purpose, not the main purpose for going to this place. You go there to drink something and talk.

(12:4) You said from the beginning that you don't like the place, but you think some of the people you go with to the coffee shop do enjoy the place or you also think they don't enjoy it?

Definitely there are other people who would enjoy the place, definitely.

(12:5) Why do you think they enjoy it and you don't?

I don't like crowded places. Maybe that's why I don't enjoy it. Other people like to be in the middle of the crowd.

The Café as the anchor point of the Sūq. Crowded and very loud. The coffee shop is a socialization place.

Sūqs are loud.

Mobile vendors are constantly intruding.

(12:6) Ok, so you don't like the dirt and you don't like the crowd; but do you like the tea that they serve there for example?

Yes.

(12:7) Is it any special kind of tea?

No food and drinks there are the same, there is nothing special. You can find this in any similar Sūq.

(12:8) So, do you think the Sūqs in Cairo are different from any other traditional Arabic street? Or do you think they are all the same?

Maybe the overall look of the Sūq is the same, but definitely the type of products or how they are selling or how they are approaching people could be different from one place to another.

13) Since you mentioned that they are all the same, so if I may ask you, do you prefer the mall better or more than the Sūq?

I don't think the mall is selling the same products as in the Sūqs. As a product I don't think that there are any malls selling souvenirs. I go to the mall to buy clothes, to buy electronics, but I don't go to the old Sūq to buy electronics.

(13:1) So, you think they are completely different.

Yes.

(13:2) Generally, you would say that malls are better than Sūqs? As an experience?

More practical. Easy to shop. For me it's a better experience.

(13:3) What is the essence of that experience that you find better in a mall? What is it that makes you more comfortable in a mall? Is it about comfort, am I correct?

It's comfort and for me it is more practical. I can find a parking easy and I can go directly to the shop I want. And I don't have anything to buy from the Sūqs.

14) You used to go with your family or with your friends, does the experience differ?

If I go with my friends, we will not go for shopping. We will go to smoke shisha or to have a drink then we come back.

(14:1) Never have you tried walking around?

With my family we used to walk to find more shops, but with my friends we go directly to the coffee shop or to the restaurant eat food and leave.

Sūqs are crowded places.

Food and drink are the same as anywhere else, nothing special.

Sūqs differ from one place to the other is service but not in appearance.

Malls are more practical.
Malls offer easier shopping experience.
Malls have dedicated parking.
Malls are easier to navigate.



Figure A.9.2 – Alleyway near *Khan al-Khalili*, Cairo. By author.

(14:2) Anything about the old buildings that you remember or stayed in your memory? It could be something fascinating or something that you don't like.

I don't like the place, as I told you I have been here few times. I did not find anything interesting there in terms of architectural design. Maybe because I am not an architect, I cannot see the difference between old buildings and modern buildings in terms of design. I cannot see the difference why this building is nice or why this building is bad.



Figure A.9.3 – *Al-Moez Street, Cairo*. By author.

(14:3) *But in your opinion...*

In my opinion I don't like dirty places, even the elevations of the buildings are not clean. The buildings are not well maintained. Mostly there are poor people who live there so the buildings are not looking nice. Maybe if they just maintain it or just repaint them it would look better but for me, I don't like these kinds of things.

15) *Is there any specific memory or event that happened to you in the Sūq that you would like to share?*

No there is nothing specific that happened there. It's like you go to the mall but in a different way. As if you are going to buy a couple of shirts. Nothing special, I can't remember. The last time I have been to that place I was 16 years old, so around 30 years back.

Thank you so much for your time.

Buildings in the Sūqs are old and not well maintained.

Appendix A.10

Interviews – Transcription (07) LD

Observation. My third visit to *Bastakia* was different because I was accompanied by 31 of my History of Interior Design class. The weather is cooler now—at 35 degrees as opposed to 47 during my first visits—and the streets seem to be more occupied. My students' mission was to sketch some of the traditional housing elements, for purposes of using them as an inspiration of a textile design. The project was part of a larger governmental initiative, called *Sikka*, which aims at revitalizing the older districts of the city and to acquaint younger generations with Dubai's cultural heritage. The project was exciting to me too, because the term *Sikka* itself is an Arabic word meaning a road, a passageway or a small street. So, I found this an excellent opportunity to conduct one or two interviews with the people I would meet in the event.

We reached the *Bastakia* parking in our university bus, and we were escorted by our guide to the entrance of the settlement, where a traditional 'House of Hair' installation is placed. The guide offered the students some information about the area then showed us the way to the Serkal House, where the official *Sikka* event is to take place. The students were then briefed about the project and I gave them 45min. to explore and sketch. We agreed to meet back at the Serkal house for refreshments before we head back to campus. Upon their dismissal, the students actively engaged with the space and wasted no time in filling their Instagram stories with photos of *Bastakia* and the old houses. Once they started sketching, I took a short walk around the settlement, where I met LD, a Lebanese businesswoman who came to participate in the *Sikka* event. I introduced myself and offered to show her the way to Serkal house. On the way, I explained to her the nature of my project. She agreed to conduct the interview with me and we scheduled a meeting for the next day. We also agreed to collaborate in a project with the students, where their sketches would be displayed in her booth at the main night of the *Sikka* event. Once, the students came back to Serkal House, I introduced LD, who invited them to participate in her booth, we had refreshments and we head back to campus.

The night of the event. *Bastakia* looks completely different at night, under the starry veil of the sky and the warm light accentuating the houses' niches. The alleyways do not look as inviting at night, where the winding passageways get narrower and darker as they crawl

Researcher's Notes and Identification of Sub-themes

Different names used to describe the same space, such as *Sikka*, *Tareeq* and *Harab*.

Old architecture serves as backdrops of social media posts for younger generations.



Figure A.10.1 – The *Sikka* event at *Bastakia* in Dubai. Top left, alley showing *al-Serkal House*. Top right, lighting installation at an alleyway. Bottom, night view of *Bastakia* main entrance with the mosque behind. By author.

deeper into the settlement. Still, the silhouette of a brightly lit mosque at the rear of the settlement is reassuring, acting as a compass that resides above the space. Reaching Serkal house, I saw different events, each occupying one of the nearby alleyways, with light/art installations, small performances and booths infusing life into the sleepy settlement. Inside the Serkal house, we had our students' work displayed on small easels. The event was successful, despite the modest audience who voluntarily attended the traditional event.

The mosque is a guiding landmark of the old settlement.

The majority of Dubai people are not interested in traditional cultural events.

- 1) Hello, thank you very much for accepting to conduct this interview with me today. This interview and its content are part of my PhD research on Arabian Sūqs. The purpose of the research is to better understand people's experience of traditional market streets, so do you agree for me to use your

answers as part of this research and to include them in future publications?

Hi, yes, of course, I do.

- 2) As confirmed in the Participant's Information Sheet and Consent Forms, your identity will remain anonymous. Since this is an interview concerning the meaning of Arabian Sūqs as experienced by Arabian communities, it is important to get a little information about your ethnic background. Allow me to ask you, do you consider yourself an Arab?

Yes, I am an Arab, I am from Lebanon.

Where were you born/raised?

I was born and raised in Lebanon, Beirut specifically.

- 3) So, how often do you visit traditional Arabian Sūqs?

Usually traditional Sūqs we don't have them in Beirut, where I was born and raised. So, whenever we wanted to visit the Sūqs we had to go to another city. In Lebanon for example, we can go to Tripoli, this is a nice place, we have a couple of Sūqs there. Or whenever we travel, if we are travelling to Syria, there are some Sūqs there, if we go to Egypt, to Morocco, we make sure that the Sūqs are part of our trip.

(3:1) Why do you want to visit the Sūqs when you go to these places?

You have different types of Sūqs in different countries. So, they give you a nice idea about the country you are visiting. You can feel that there is a difference between one Sūq and another. You can see different people; you can see different food. It's different experience from one place to another.

(3:2) So, you always make it a point to go to the Sūq when you are traveling?

Yeah, it's a fun experience.

- 4) So, what do you mainly do in the Sūqs? What aspects of the culture do you want to see or experience?

Usually just the walk there is something nice. Just looking at the stalls, looking at the clothes, usually they have traditional clothes. It's a completely different experience than going to a mall or street shopping. So, you look at the clothes, you can buy some nice pieces, sometimes a nice top traditional one, hat, accessories. You find a lot of nice accessories, most of them are handmade. So, nothing like the market or the expensive stuff or the brands. So, you find something that is nice to look, different colours, different shapes. You feel it is different from something that you find in the store. Also, the food, especially when you are visiting different Sūqs in different countries, the food is different, totally different, so it is nice to taste to know what they do. The homemade stuff, the specialty of the countries.

(4:1) The clothes and accessories you buy would you actually wear them, or you keep them as souvenirs?

Sūqs differ from one country to the other.

Sūqs offer handmade merchandise. They give you an insight of the country's cultural products.

Sometimes I buy them as souvenirs, but I make sure that I have something that I can wear. Maybe not on every occasion but I make sure it can match. I like to make something special with my clothes. So, sometimes when you are wearing some regular clothes and you put some traditional accessory, handmade, it will give you a different look. So, I make sure to have something from what I bought that I can wear.

(4:2) So, you said that they are cheaper than the mall, so you don't mind things of a cheaper quality? We are talking about Dubai, so people are more or less, I don't want to generalize, but people here do care sometimes about the brands. So, when you buy things and you feel you paid a cheap price, does this interfere with your choice of how to wear them?

For me, even if I like to buy something expensive, I like to buy something that is nice. I don't care about the price. Something that is handmade or artistic is much nicer than something that is just a brand, but a regular one that everyone is wearing. You know when things are handmade, each piece is different than the other, so you can feel this when you are wearing it or when you are buying it. I feel happy when I get them.

- 5) So, before you go to the Sūq, you said that you go to different Sūqs whenever you visit countries, are there any preparations you make before you go there?

Usually Sūqs, as we said, are not in luxurious places, not refined. Because we don't know how the people are like, [emmm] I make sure that my clothes are decent. I don't want everyone to be looking at me in a different way. We have to respect the people that are there, because most people in the Sūqs they have different traditions. So, when you are wearing decently you accommodate everyone's thinking and their lifestyle.

(5:1) Are there any gadgets that you bring along?

Other than money no [giggles]. Nothing in specific, but cameras yes, but because we have our phones. Now the camera is part of any trip.

What kind of photos do you take?

Something to show the background, to remember what I saw there. I don't like to forget things... we tend to forget with time. So, I make sure that some stalls that I like are there in the photo. Sometimes I take a picture of the whole Sūq when I stand at the beginning of it to see the whole thing. There is traffic there, lots of things, busy, things hanging here and there. Clothes along with food and different things. So, you feel it's an art piece. So, I like to have it in like a painting. Sometimes I am not even in the picture. I take a photo of the place itself.

Owning a traditional homemade item from the Sūqs brings happiness.

People living or selling at Sūqs have a conservative tradition.

Sūqs are a full picture made up of smaller pieces.

(5:2) Does the architecture in that picture matters? Or, just the people and the stalls?

It depends. Some Sūqs don't have special architecture, they have just these small metal or wooden things just to hang the items. Other Sūqs like in Tripoli for example, it is in an old place, so I like to watch the architecture there. If there are some arches like that, I like to take it in a frame [photo]. If not, then the business of the place is amazing.

6) Do you usually go there alone or with friends and family?

I prefer to go with someone, because sometimes I feel intimidated in the Sūqs it's too busy. Also, when you see something you like to share, when you are amazed about something you like to share because you are not going there just to buy. You are going to look around and to see nice stuff. So, I like to share, like 'look at this piece,' or 'this is nice do you think I can buy it.' So, it is nice to talk about it, it's an experience by itself.

(6:1) So, you talk about your experience with the people around you?

Yes, yes, yes. Sometimes if we are in a group or just with my friend or husband, we like to talk and have fun about things. If you are tasting something that is new for you, you taste it then you make the faces, or you like it, or you buy more. Even if I am trying stuff, it is much easier when you have someone, and you are sharing.

(6:2) Do you feel like you can talk to strangers in the Sūq?

Yes, usually in most of the Sūqs that I have been, they are very nice people, they are friendly and welcoming. Much better than when you visit a mall.

(6:3) So, you would actually ask around and talk to people?

Yes of course, and you can bargain. It's not like you are in a mall and you just go to shop and you take a piece, pay and leave. Bargaining is a fun part of it.

(6:4) What do you do to bargain?

When you ask about a price, you know that they are putting a higher price because they know that people will bargain. So, you just have to throw half the price there. And you tell them no I will take it for half the price, and they go like we cannot sell you at this price. So, you go up and they go down until you reach a good deal. It's fun, it's part of the experience as well.

7) Can you describe in detail the activities that you do in the Sūq? The types of food you taste, the places you go to and what you really look at? Do you have a certain routine when you go to a Sūq?

It depends on the Sūq if I know it or not. If it is the first time, I usually stop a lot at the stalls that I see, I don't buy immediately because lots of things are just repeated here and there. So, if a Sūq is known for scarves, let's say, you will find tens of stalls having the same scarves. I like to look around. So, I go, I stop, I see what they are famous for. Then I walk all the way till the end, I bargain sometimes along the way.

Sūqs imply a form of collective experience, a form of share-ability.

Fun experience.

People in the Sūqs are friendly and warm.

Bargaining is part of the Sūq's experience.

Then when I reach the end, I go back, and I buy what I found best for me.

(7:1) But is it easy to go back in a Sūq?

Not always, but some Sūqs are really not very big. If I feel I will be lost, or I don't have another day. See if I have a couple of days, the first day I look and the second day I buy. If I only have few hours or half a day, and I feel it is big and I am going far, then no. But I always have to look at a couple of places, you cannot just buy from the first one at the entrance, you have to go deeper a bit. Mostly, the ones at the entrance are the most expensive. Some people they just go there buy something, like a souvenir, and leave. When you go deeper, you find a better catch, many things that are still available.

(7:2) So, you only go there for the shopping and looking around or do you do other activities?

Sometimes food tasting, but it depends how it is displayed. If it is a clean place, well packed, I would taste, and I would buy. But, in Sūqs some of the stalls have open food, so I don't like buying from them. If things are being cooked there, like if they are making some bread or they are making some 'lguemat' [UAE sweets made like round dough balls that are fried and dipped in honey], in Dubai they do that, just frying them in front of you, I would taste of course.

- 8) You told me at the beginning that Sūqs differ from one place to the other, what are some of the main differences that you have noticed? Do you find the difference in the actual layout of the place or just the merchandise?

Both. Morocco for example is an Old country, Tripoli as well, so in these places there is a difference in architecture. Sometimes you feel a difference in the vibe too. The difference in the food definitely. There are some Sūqs that don't offer food at all, some that are famous for fruits, they put whatever they are famous for. So, you see in Dubai they are frying some stuff or making the bread, in other Sūqs they just display fruits, other ones they are just putting the clothes. Also, the difference in the type of merchandise, as we said scarves in one place, accessories in another, bags, if they are famous with leather for example, they put small bags here and there, jackets. So, it depends each Sūq has a different type of merchandise.

(8:1) The architectural places, are they different as well, or do you find a similarity in the layout of the place? Does it have a similar logic? Like would know where the place of the

You need to dig deeper in the Sūqs to get a better bargain.

Not all Sūqs offer what we would call a 'clean' meal in our modern standards.

Sūqs in different places have different architecture, food types and vibes.

The common thing among most Sūqs is the open air, busy-ness and the outside display.



Figure A.10.2 – Old Sūq of Tripoli, Lebanon.

mosque would be, the coffee shop, the stalls... or they differ completely?

No, no they are different completely. From my experience, different countries have different layout. The common thing is that they are all open, busy and things are just displayed here and there. Some Sūqs would just put clothes all the way then you find food in a separate place. Other Sūqs you find everything mixed up. One stall for accessories. Another stall for clothes. A third stall for food. In Morocco, for example, in the Sūq there was a butcher shop in the middle of the Sūq and clothes next to it that was a completely different experience. Another one had vegetables, so you find some vegetables on the floor, then there are some bags next to it.

(8:2) So, there is no actual logic in the layout that ties them similarly to each other?

Other than they are all open and hanging their stuff out for everyone to see, they are different.

(8:3) Have you ever walked in the small alleyways in between, or you always go through the main spine?

I do. In some places you just have to go in the small alleys. It is also an experience by itself. The shops in the alleys are smaller and there are not lots of shops. Some of the Sūqs are between houses, so when you go to the alley you might find a house then a small stall and so on. The main street is usually full of stalls. I like to go in the alleys to experience, it's an experience.

The alleyways are an experience on their own, where small houses are mixed with shopping outlets.

- 9) Do you know a specific vendor or place, for example in Tripoli because that's the one in Lebanon, that you actually go to visit every time you go there?
 [emmm] no no. I don't go there regularly. It is part of tourism for me even if we go to Tripoli, I go there for tourism. Because in my city, we don't have a traditional Sūq, or I don't know of any. When I go, for me it is part of travelling, even if I go from my city to another in Lebanon itself, it's part of having fun. I don't go to a Sūq when it is juts next door.
 (9:1) You don't just go craving to eat something in that place, or to see a specific building? Something that you have a memory of? Or you just go for tourism and exploration?
 Yes yes, just to go around.
 (9:2) Did you happen to see any festivals or any celebrations when you were visiting any of these Sūqs?
 Sometimes there are these kinds of traditional dance but usually it is not in the Sūq itself. Usually it is in the area before you enter the Sūq, in touristic places, you find people selling coffee and dancing in a special [traditional] way.
 (9:3) Have you ever sat on a traditional coffee shop in Sūq, or was it never a part of your itinerary?
 No no, I need time personally. If I want to sit in the coffee shop then I will miss all the time, I will not have time to look around and to buy and to bargain. So, I like to walk slowly and to enjoy the trip.
 (9:4) So, you don't feel the need because there are shops that offer food and drinks on the way?
 Right, but also in the Sūq I don't see that there is a place to sit.
- 10) So different Sūqs have different experiences from the mall, what brings this feeling to you?
 Different Sūqs have different architecture and different layouts, some of the Sūqs are open and this is the difference between a mall and a Sūq. When you go to a Sūq, you are expecting to be sweaty, to walk in the open-air you cannot try clothes like you do in the mall. In the mall it is just clean, there is an AC, and everything is neat there. So, part of the experience is just to be walking outdoor and also about the display of the food. You are in an open market, so some of the food is displayed there on the shelves and some packed. Some of them is being just prepared. So, if I want to taste for example, I wouldn't take a cup of tea even. You would see them, that they take it from someone, wash it up with little water in front of you, fill it again and give it to another person. So, I would never try something like that [giggle].
 (10:1) It's communal living [laughing]

Sūqs require walking, sweating and constantly interacting. Malls are clean and are air-conditioned.

Diminishing social barriers include sharing cups.

Consumption of food and drinks extends the Sūqs' aspects of social share-ability?

Bottled water is considered a modern thing for the Sūq? This is quite a questionable remark from the respondent.

Yes yes [laughing] in lots of places [Sūqs] this is what they do, they don't have disposable cups. They just wash it a bit in front of you, fill it again and give it back. Wash it with little water, they just put few drops in it, move it right and left, throw the water out and fill it for another person to drink from. So, I would never try something like that!

(10:2) Even if you are very hot? We know that Sūqs could become very hot during summer and very cold during winter.

No, I cannot try something like that even if I am dying [giggles]. I would find a bottle that is closed. In some Sūqs you can find some modern stuff in the corners here or there. Someone selling few bottles of water, so I would buy something like that. Usually I take my own bottle.

(10:3) So, this is part of your preparations then?

Yes yes, this is part of the preparations, cuz I avoid having anything that is open. Even the food if I see it is homemade food and just displayed in a big pot that is open, I cannot have it. If it is being prepared or fried bread or something dry, then yes, I would try it.

(10:4) So again, if I ask you in your opinion what characterizes the traditional Sūq from any other street or the mall?

The difference between the traditional Sūq and the mall is the layout itself and the display of the items. When you go to the Sūq, you are expecting something in the open. The mall is cleaner more refined, luxurious. You find more stuff in the mall.

(10:5) Which one would you prefer?

For the daily shopping and our daily needs definitely, the mall would be better. In the mall I can find things that I need for special occasions and for my daily stuff. But the Sūq is just when you want to look around, to buy something traditional and just to visit, to see the experience itself.

(10:6) So, for you the Sūq is not for every day?

No no no it is not for everyday things that you need to buy. When you go to the Sūq, as we said, it is outdoor and usually the floor is not that clean, so will get sweaty and you will have to wear special shoes and you cannot find everything that you need.

(10:7) So, in this sense can we say that Sūqs are old and are reserved for tourism or you think that they still can serve a purpose?

In modern day they serve the purpose for the people living around them in the same city. Because there are people who go buy their daily stuff from there. But for us, in our modern life and because we are living in a big city and we work, we cannot find everything that we want in a Sūq.

11) Can you describe your most enduring memory of a traditional Arabian Sūq, whether pleasant or unpleasant?

Yes, one of the experiences was in Morocco. I had some friends from there and they took me to a Sūq and they said this is such a nice place to see. When we arrived there, it

You cannot find everything you need in a Sūq.

The Sūqs still serve a purpose for people living near them.

In Sūqs the things you see first so not always give you the best impression. You need to explore them further in order to excavate the beauty that is hidden beyond the entrances.

started with a pile of garbage at the entrance, it was so smelly! I didn't expect to see anything nice inside. So, I was shocked, and I was like 'are you sure there is something nice inside?' When we went in it was a different experience, it is an old Sūq, lots of small houses, it was so busy, lots of alleys. It's a huge Sūq! But whatever you see from outside it is different, though you still see some dirty things on the floor, some old fruits there, vegetables. It is a different experience at the entrance. At the entrance you cannot expect to see something nice inside this pile of garbage was a shock for me and also, I took a picture with the pile of garbage behind me with the entrance of the Sūq itself.

Ok, thank you very much for your time.

What is you at the entrance is not the real thing? You have to go deeper.

Appendix A.11

Interviews – Transcription (08) HI

My visit to Dubai's Old Gold Sūq took place in the late days of February 2019. The weather was beautiful with a clear sunny sky accompanied by the soft cool breezes that flow to the Sūq from the nearby Creekside. The place was relatively busy for an early Monday morning, with many merchants, workers and clients roaming the covered narrow strip that is flanked on both sides by a series of large display windows that safely guarded tons of sparkling gold products. It did not take me long to locate a participant, a 64 years old Egyptian lady visiting the Sūq to buy a golden pendant as a gift for her friend's daughter. The lady (HI) was enthusiastic to tell me about her visits to different Arabian Sūqs. She preferred to speak in Arabic, so she can express herself better and agreed that I make necessary translations. We sat in a small coffee shop and started our interview.

- 1) Hello, thank you very much for accepting to conduct this interview with me today. This interview and its content are part of my PhD research on Arabian Sūqs. The purpose of the research is to better understand people's experience of traditional market streets, so do you agree for me to use your answers as part of this research and to include them in future publications?

Yes, I agree to do the interview with you.

- 2) I do understand that you wish to conduct this interview in Arabic, and of course I can make the translation after which you can look into the transcription and make any changes you feel better express your ideas. Allow me to ask you first, what is your nationality?

I am an Egyptian.

(2:1) Where were you born/raised?

I was born and raised in Cairo, but after I got married, I came to Dubai.

- 3) So, do you usually visit traditional Arabian Sūqs?
I love old Sūqs very much.

(3:1) So, you visit them often?

Researcher's Notes and

Identification of Sub-themes

Weather affects Sūq experience

Love old Sūqs – Emotional

No not very often, but whenever I travel to places, I like to visit their old Sūq. It is possible that sometimes I do not wish to buy anything, but I like to go see it, how does it look like, what are the products they have, all these things are interesting to me.

(3:2) So when you go to the Sūq to see the things you are interested in, what are the activities you usually do?

First of all, I go there to walk, I love the open-air... See you can find malls everywhere in the world all the same... but the old Sūq in any country reflects the nature of the people who live there... So, I like to walk, to sit in a coffee shop to have coffee or some of the traditional drinks they have... I like to try traditional food and drinks... yes this is what I like to do.

(3:3) So, you believe that every Sūq has its own traditional food and drinks?

Yes, of course ... Some places like Cairo they offer 'foul' sandwiches or 'halabessab' drink... in Morocco they make green tea with mint... in Syria they have 'jallab'... All these things they offer them in the Sūqs... We, from other countries, might not know them... In Lebanon in the middle of the street you find them making 'manoushab' I really love eating and drinking while walking too.

(3:4) When you are walking, so you don't have to be sitting somewhere?

I like to eat/drink while walking and of course if there is a coffee shop, I also like to sit a little to observe what people are doing. I really like it.

(3:5) Aside from observing, do you also like to hear the conversations between people who are around you?

Yes, of course. I do not intend to do it of course, but if I sit in a coffee shop I will listen to other people's conversations because these places in the old Sūqs are usually very small and the tables are crammed next to each other. So, it is very probable that you will hear other people's conversations.

(3:6) The dialects are different in different places?

Yes of course dialects differ drastically.

(3:7) But you are able to understand them?

I do understand the dialects of Syria and Lebanon, or *Belad al-Sham*, but *Belad al-Maghrib* [Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco] no way. I don't understand the dialects of the Gulf people either, even though I lived for a long time in Dubai.

4) From what you told me, I understand that you visited many different Arab countries. If so, which Sūqs did you visit there?

I have been to Marrakesh, I visited the Sūq there. I have been to Syria, I saw Sūq al-Hamidia. I went to Medina and Mecca,

Walking
Old Sūqs reflect the character of the people living there.
Traditional food and drink.

Cultural products differ from one country to the other.

Casual setting.

The coffee shops are tightly organized.
Interactive you will listen to what others' say.

and I visited the Sūqs there. Of course, in Egypt I visited Khan al-Khalili, it is very famous. And in Dubai of course I always go to the Old Sūq, since I came here in the 70s, I go to the Old Sūq.

5) So, before you go to the Sūq, are there any preparations you make before you go there?

If am travelling, like outside Dubai or Cairo, I have to fix my schedule, so I know which day I will be visiting the Sūq. I like to make sure that the day I will be visiting the Sūq there are lot of people, so there will be many products and activities done there. But if I am in Cairo or Dubai, sometimes I just wake up and decide to visit the Sūq, I call my sisters, or my daughters, and we can have a nice family outing.

(5:1) Are there any specific preparations for clothing or any gadgets that you bring along?

Yes of course, when I go to one of the Old Sūqs I dress up very causally. I wear tennis shoes or slippers, something very comfortable because I will be walking in the street.

(5:2) You can't wear something ... [making hand gestures meaning classy]

No, no, no. It does not work. I don't think so. I don't even remember seeing anyone in the Sūqs, even local people, wearing '*habillé*' [French word for dressy]. They usually wear casual, with comfortable footwear, because the floor/ground of the Sūq is usually uneven, sometimes there are stones or holes, so heels would get stuck there. Tennis shoes are the best.

(5:2) What do you take with you, camera for example? Or you don't like taking photos?

In some cities I like to take photos of unusual stuff, mainly is foreign countries (Western). But see in the olden days, I would take a camera... now the mobile phone is enough. Whenever there is something I like to photograph, I take a shot with my mobile.

6) Ok, so you told me that you like to walk in the Sūq, can you please describe for me in detail what you like to see and do there? Let us imagine you are in the Sūq now, what would be catching your eyes?

See when I go to the old Sūqs in Arab countries, one of the things that always catches my eye is the *bokbour* (incense), I look for it. I also like to look at the porcelain or clay products that are particular to the country I am visiting. For example, in Marrakesh, their Sūq is gorgeous, and it is so different from the Sūqs in Lebanon, Syria, Medina or Dubai. It is different because they have their own porcelain products that are glazed in beautiful colours. You know like the '*Tajin*' and these things. I adore Moroccan *abayas*, that are in Tunisia and Morocco. They don't have those in Egypt or Saudi. I like

Casual clothes – Comfortable shoes

Holes in the ground/Uneven

Technology difference

these particular cultural things that are not found anywhere else. Also, in Marrakesh you have these vendors or people who are sitting in the streets making shows, like rooster fights or snake dances. These things are very different, it is such a beautiful Sūq. They also have their signature coffee shops, where you sit to drink green tea with mint while watching the sunset. The sunset tea is a very famous activity in the Sūqs of *Belad al-Maghrib*, they wait for it because the sunset is very beautiful there.

(6:1) What else characterizes the Sūq of Marrakesh, does the architecture of it differ for example?

See, Marrakesh itself as a city has a very different architecture. All the houses are built in red, this is why they call it Red Marrakesh. Their mountains are also red. The Sūq itself does not have much architecture, in the middle of it, there is a large open court where all games are showcased, like the rooster fights and the snake dances I told you about. Sometimes they even have light performances of traditional dance and music there. People usually like to watch all these. But the Marrakesh Sūq itself, like all others, it is a long street with small passageways branching from it, with tiny shops displaying their products outside. Some of these passageways have roofs, in the old building style.

(6:2) All displays are outside ...

Yes, most of the products are put outside, so people who are walking can see them. See, Sūq visitors may not enter the shops, so when they see the products outside, they would be interested to buy something. Then the vendor usually takes them inside the shop.

(6:3) So, the vendors are also standing outside?

Usually, there is one vendor standing outside calling the people on the street and another one inside the shop.

(6:4) Has there been any incident when a Sūq vendor did an interesting thing that caught your eye?

In *Khan al-Khalili* in Cairo, vendors are always roaming the streets and calling people. They would even pull you inside the shop [laughing]. They keep on talking, bargaining and explaining, to the extent that you might feel obliged to enter their shop. Some people might get irritated but others, like me, would just enter the shop to see what they have.

(6:5) But would you say that the vendors are nice in general?

Generally, I would say the Sūq vendors are usually very nice, warm and willing to negotiate. The only place where the Sūq vendors are difficult to communicate with is in the Grand Bazaar in Istanbul. The Sūq there is also very beautiful and has lots of beautiful products, but the Turkish personality is rude somehow.

(6:6) Are you implying that Arab vendors are nicer?

The Sūq is the long narrow street with shops displaying products outside

Visibility

Calling

Vendors Movement
Vendors Talking
Vendors Bargaining
Vendors
Nagging/Bothering

Vendors are generally nice

Arab vendors' approach varies from one city to the other

Yes, but the best out of all of them in terms of hospitality are the Lebanese vendors. They are so welcoming, and their approach is very warm. They also seldom bother the Sūq visitors, with constant nagging, like in Cairo for example. As I told you, in Khan al-Khalili the vendors can become too annoying, because they keep on asking people to buy or come inside the shop. In Lebanese Sūqs, the vendors are so warm and do not impose.

- 7) **Ok, you were telling me earlier about the food and drinks you tried in different Sūqs, can you please describe for me some of these?**

In Cairo, I love sitting in the coffee shop and have coffee. I also love having Cane Sugar juice, it is amazing. Usually, in between the small shops in *Khan al-Khalili* there is always a Cane Sugar juice vendor. There are also the Liquorice juice and Hibiscus mobile vendors. I never tried these.

(7:1) Why?

No. I get worried drinking from mobile vendors [laughing]. See he pours the juice from a glass or copper vessel that he carries on his back. The cups he uses are carried in his pocket. So, I get scared that they might not be clean.

(7:2) So, you get the feeling that they are not clean...

Yes, because they are not in a shop with clean machines and cups. In the Cane Sugar juice shop for example, I see the sugar cane fruit washed and put into the machine, where they are squeezed. Then I see the juice being extracted from the machine that directly feeds it into a clean cup. I also prefer if the cup is a disposable one that can be covered with a lid.

- 8) **Do you usually bargain with the vendors?**

Yes of course. In these old Sūqs you always have to bargain.

(8:1) Why?

Because they always start with double the actual price for the item. So, I keep on bargaining until we reach half of the price of the thing I want to buy.

(8:2) And you actually get it for half the price?

Yes, I take it for half the price or lower, depending on the price that I ask for. See, sometimes, we don't reach an agreement at first, but when I walk away, he calls me back and gives it to me [laughing]... I always know that he will call me back.

(8:3) So you wait for him to call you [laughing]...

Yes [making a proud face].

- 9) **I understand from you that you love the interaction with the people and/or activities in the Sūq, given all the things you described and the fact that you like to go to the Sūq when it is busy. So, did it ever happen that you saw a conflict or went through one because of these interactions?**

I don't remember having seen or experienced one.

Vendors are welcoming

Cleanliness of mobile vendors' products

Visibility

Bargaining process

(9:1) Does this mean that people in the Sūqs, all these people and activities, work harmoniously together without any problems?

Not really... Well I can tell you of an incident that happened in the Grand Bazar in Istanbul... actually this is why I told you about it before. One time, I was with a Moroccan friend there and she liked something and wanted to buy it. When she entered the shop and tried to bargain with the vendor, like we do in our Sūqs, he shouted at her, kicked her out of the shop. She was very shocked because he was very rude. See this is one single experience, but from this experience I developed a feeling that Turkish vendors are rude.

(9:2) You said, 'in our countries,' so does this mean that Arab vendors are not rude and are warmer?

Yes, they are much warmer, because we all know each other and share the same values. So, the Arab vendors understand the Arabian social-cultural norms and we all know the proper way to act with each other.

9:3) So, we were telling me that you visited many Sūqs, so in Sūq of Medina for example, do Saudi vendors identify you as an Egyptian or as a non-Saudi? How do they act with you then?

See the people of Medina are extremely kind. When you enter one of the shops there, the vendors are very hospitable. I usually like to buy from there tablecloths and prayer carpets. The Medina vendor will never let you leave his shop unhappy; he will give you what you wanted to buy in addition to a small gift.

(9:4) Does this mean that you buy what you want from there with the price you ask for?

Yes, I buy from him with the price that I ask for. Many of them would ask me first how much I want to spend and would insist that I take everything I need. Let's say I buy 10 pieces of '*sebha*' he will give me an extra one as a gift.

(9:5) How does Suq of Medina look like?

In the old Sūq of Medina, the Prophet's mosque is in the middle and the shops are surrounding it from three sides. See, this area has a lot of hotels for the pilgrims... so all the area on ground level is full of small shops. They sell prayer carpets, abayas, *sebha*, prayer clothes and linen. And once you enter the shop, they greet you warmly saying "Hello *Hajja*." The word *Hajja* [pilgrim] itself fills you with so much warmth and pride, making you feel like you accomplished an important thing.

(9:6) Does the Sūq of Medina have small alleyways like those of other Sūqs?

No, no they don't have. All the shops there are lined up in the street. See these shops are not very old, they are modern. This

Difference between Arab vendors and their Turkish counterpart from an Arab point of view

Arab vendors understand Arab culture and social norms.

The Sūq is a happy place. Sūqs are entertaining Loud vendors Loud people, moving and laughing

Sūq's relationship to mosque.

Sūq is not like the very old Sūqs of Cairo, Syria or Marrakesh. These Sūqs are so old to the extent that the stones there smell old and are full of history and heritage/civilization. The stones are old, and their edges are black... so beautiful. I love these old Sūqs.

10) You like the old Sūqs more than the new malls?

Yes of course.

(10:1) So if you have the option to go to the mall or Sūq, both in the same place, which one will you choose?

Definitely the Sūq. The mall I can find it everywhere. In Dubai, where I live, there are plenty of malls, in Cairo there are many malls, Europe too has a lot. But the old Sūqs are not always available.

(10:2) So this is something you love to do?

Yes, I love going there because it shows me the true nature of the city and its people. The people of the Sūq are the real people. In the mall, you see only a certain class of society. But in the Sūq, you see the majority of a city's social make up, at least 50% of it.

11) Can you describe your most enduring memory of a traditional Arabian Sūq, whether pleasant or unpleasant?

Sūq al-Hamidia in Syria [Damascus] is a very old Sūq, it is a narrow path, with a glass roof, flanked on both sides by small shops. In front of every shop the vendors stand on chairs, calling people to come their products. So, they sell some products that are present in almost all of the Sūqs, like *Khan al-Khalili*, but in Sūq al-Hamidia, the way the vendors show off these products is so unique without actually bothering people [looking a little shy].

(11:1) So, what is particular about these products?

See these products are usually for young girls who are about to get married. So, they have on display some bridal lingerie and belly dance costumes. They sell something called 'the clapping panty' or *abu-Saafa* [giggles] and they call the name in the middle of the Sūq. See these panties have a magnet or something in it that responds to the sound of the clap, so supposedly once the groom claps his hands the panty is supposed to fall off by itself [laughs]. This is something very funny, and it is made for young brides to have fun with. When you go inside the shop the vendor makes a demonstration how the thing works, and it is a very funny experience. I always remember this [laughs].

(11:2) And the people in the Sūq react lightly to this? Is this a street or a building, can you describe it?

It is both a street and a building... actually it is a covered street that connects to the mosque [Umayyad Mosque]. So, the passageway has shops on both sides and the vendors are calling 'come and see *abu-Saafa*,' so people go inside to see it. And he calls the girls and women walking in the Sūq and shows them the belly dancing costumes and fancy lingerie.

Gifts / Compliments / Hospitality
Vendors' greetings and their emotional effect

Different Sūqs have different layouts

The stones smell of old-ness and history/heritage

Emotional attachment
Real people
The Sūq reflects the real people / Malls are not

Vendors selling tactics differ from one Sūq to another.

(11:3) So this is a happy place?

Yes, very happy. By the way all old Sūqs are happy and entertaining.

(11:4) Even though they look old with old black stones, like you described?

They are all happy. For me, they make me feel happy. They are full of life, with the loud vendors and loudly talking people, moving in and out of shops. They have different layouts, but they are all lively and happy places. See, Sūq al-Hamidia is closed and covered but they illuminated at night, while Khan al-Khalili is open without a roof. Still they are both near the mosques. People in both places are always walking, talking and laughing; the vendors are calling and bargaining. Very happy and lively.

(11:4) A last comment here to this last question, do you see tourists reacting to the activities you described above in the same way Arab Sūq-goers do?

No, foreigners don't react the same way. Arabs kind of understand each other, even if the dialects are different, at the end we speak the same language and we get to understand what is being said, even if it is few words. The social norms to some extent are also the same among all Arabs. Foreigners, from what I observed, like to sit in the coffee shops and to take photographs but they do not react to the Sūq events like us.

Ok, thank you very much for your time.

Foreigners do not react to the Sūq activities the same way Arabs do mainly because of language difference and familiarity with social norms.

Appendix A.12

Interviews – Transcription (09) MK

- 1) Hello, thank you very much for accepting to conduct this interview with me today. This interview and its content are part of my PhD research on Arabian Sūqs. The purpose of the research is to better understand people's experience of traditional market streets, so do you agree for me to use your answers as part of this research and to include them in future publications?

Yes, I agree to do the interview with you.

- 2) I do understand that you wish to conduct this interview in Arabic, and of course I can make the translation after which you can look into the transcription and make any changes you feel better express your ideas. Allow me to ask you first, what is your nationality?

I am Palestinian, but I lived most of my life in Dubai.

(2:1) Where were you born? And how old are you?

I was born in Nablus, Palestine and I am 69 years old.

- 3) You mentioned to me that you like to visit Sūqs?

Of course.

(3:1) Do you visit a lot of Sūqs or not many?

I like to visit historical Sūqs, those that have the essence of our culture and tradition.

(3:2) Can you give me an example of those Sūqs you visited?

I can describe to you the traditional Sūq of my hometown at Nablus. Ok? Nablus is considered the 4th or 5th city in history. It witnessed many civilizations. Of course, the current traditional Sūq at Nablus was built by the Ottomans and it looks like those found in Istanbul and Damascus (*al-Hamidia*). It also looks like one small Sūq in Jerusalem. Its design is marvellous, and I like it. It is designed as a vaulted passageway with regular domed intersections. The passageway itself is oriented towards East/West to catch the Western sea breeze and to direct it towards the eastern parts of the city. The city itself is situated between two mountains, which helps to circulate the air.

- 4) So, the Sūq itself is designed in a way to help air circulation in the city?

Of course, the one who designed it had this in mind. See, the Sūq itself is divided into several activities or merchandise, so parts of it is dedicated to clothes, another

Researcher's Notes and Identification of Sub-themes

Design of Sūqs are similar in different regions.

Design of Sūqs respect the geographic and climatic characteristics of the city.

for books, another for accessories ...etc. The production areas are far from the outlets, it is only for display. The amazing thing about this Sūq is that during winter it is warm inside, while in summer it is cool and refreshing. That is why it is always full of people, life there does not stop.

(4:1) You mean people are always there because of its weather?

Yes, it is a place for people to take refuge. But let me describe its design first and then I will tell you and its social life. Its design is as follows: a wide cobbled stone street, wide enough to allow two horse drawn carriages to pass in each direction (East/West). The shops are elevated above street level by two or three steps, not very high maybe 4-4.5 inches. The steps are wide and lead to a pedestrian platform in front of the shops.

(4:2) This way people are away from the main vehicular street?

Of course, the main street is in the middle and the pedestrian paths flank it on both sides. At the intersections, there are small roundabouts, usually domed. Under every dome there is usually a fountain. The dome's design is amazing. Its height is almost double than that of the vaults, and its sides are perforated with Damascene stained glass that allows sun light to penetrate into the Sūq. Aside from lighting, these perforations heat up the air around the dome's ceiling. In the middle of the dome there is usually a small opened shaft, allowing the hot air to escape. This purifies the air and increases air circulation in the Sūq. So, in addition to the Western sea breeze, the perforated domes make the Sūq's air very fresh and cool.

5) How about the social life in the Sūq of Nablus?

All the shop owners in the Sūq (my father was one of them) know each other, and each part of the Sūq has its own leader, or *fotouma*, whose job is to follow up on the commercial transactions of his particular profession. So, if any customer comes to him complaining about any trader, his responsibility is to reconcile between people and to punish cheaters. See, if any shop owner cheats, this *fotouma* will make him close the shop. This is why people come to this Sūq having a very big trust in its shop owners and the products sold there. You have to keep in mind that people in the Sūq are of different social statuses, poor, mid-level and rich. So, you have to keep social peace.

(5:1) Who actually appointed this *fotouma*, was it the people of the Sūq or the government?

The people of course. He is one of the shop owners and people usually choose him because of his fame, they call

Shop hierarchies

Sūq as a refuge

Sūq dimensions.

Sūq's architectural elements: domes, vaults and decorative motifs.

Fotoumas and the Sūq's social governance.

him also *Sheikh al-Tujjar* (the head of merchants). Each profession has its own *Sheikh*, so there one for textiles, one for gold and one for carpets... etc. So, traders of every profession elect their leader, who also becomes their voice in many religious or political events. For example, during the month of Ramadan, the carpet traders join together to decorate the Sūq and their leader becomes the one responsible for the process. This leader also puts the rules of when to open or close the shops and he regulates the movement in vehicular streets. Usually, they stop cars from entering the streets one hour before Iftar (breaking of fast) and one hour after in order to cover the street with carpets and install food tables in the street so people can have Iftar. They also distribute sweets on people then. See, this makes the social life of Sūqs to be very attractive not only for people living in Nablus but also for tourists and visitors from other parts of Palestine. This increases the workflow in the Sūqs, that's an important part of the leaders' job. That's why also many people visiting Nablus always want to see *Khan al-Tujjar* (the name of the Sūq). Similarly, people who go to Damascus want to visit *al-Hamidia* and those who go to Istanbul want to see the Grand Bazaar. That's why Sūqs are touristic and historical attractions until today, and I heard from my family who still live there that it still retains much of its old values and traditions.

(5:2) Why?

Because it is the same people living there, in spite of the Israeli occupation. Every profession is passed from grandfather to father to son, it's heritage. The shops are passed from one generation to the other. For example, you find the shops of the *Qamhiyeh* family, who are known for selling wood rods (*nabbout*). Maybe some of the grandchildren today have different professions but for sure someone will always have to continue the family's legacy.

6) And these families, or shop owners, do they usually live near the Sūq?

Yes. See, the Sūq is the heart of the old city of Nablus. More accurately, it is the main artery of the city, connecting the different parts of the old city. This main artery has many branches that step upwards to small side districts, named after the families living there. So, aside from the Sūq's main entrance/exit there are secondary passages that connect the city's old parts. For this reason, you find all the houses in these small districts are connected together through a network of courtyards. This leads to very strong social ties between the Sūq's neighbourhoods. This is also why most industrial areas are situated away from the main

Shop vendors role in religious events.

Sūqs as promoters of economic and touristic activities.

Profession passed across generations – Heritage.

Sūq as the artery of the city. The idea of a passageway.

Sūq and the residences. For example, the factories of soap, which are very famous in Nablus, are located in the outer districts of the city. Still, these factories are usually linked to the residences of the factories' owners. That is why some families in Nablus have more than one residence, some near their shops and other near their factories. Also, most shop owners usually live near or around the Sūq because they also use the courtyards of the homes as storehouses. Whenever he needs more merchandise he can quickly go and replenish his shop.

7) **How about the women in the Sūqs? Did they use to go to the Sūq casually?**

Yes of course. In fact, most of the Sūq's activities and the shopping is made for and by women.

(7:1) What do they do, if you remember?

[laughing] ... See the Sūq has a very interesting thing. It is linked to public bathhouses (*hammam*). Some of them are only for women and the others for men, and they are located far away from each other. In Nablus, the women's *hammam* is in the Western part of the Sūq, and the men's is in the Eastern side. Men in the Sūq also have their own coffee shops, which are only reached through steps from outside of the vaulted street because they are usually placed on the roof of the shops. These roofs have planted areas with fountains and very relaxed seating, where men can have tea or *shisha*. The women also have they own coffee shops in the Nablus Sūq, but these are called *kamouniah*. These are reached from inside the Sūq itself through a small passageway that leads to an open courtyard planted with trees and decorated with fountains. In these spaces, women can also have tea, coffee and *nargeela*.

(7:2) [giggles] So it is exactly the same thing as a men's *Qahwa* but it is called *Kamouniah*?

Yes yes exactly. In these gatherings, women usually bring with them home-made pastries or sweets to share with other women. These places also serve as celebration spaces or rendezvous venues, where women can gather in large numbers outside their homes for different social purposes. Many engagement arrangements happen there too, when one woman sees another's daughter and proposes to have her marry her son for instance. See, the *Kamouniah* was very important for women, allowing them a venue for entertainment, connection and relaxation after shopping. See the social life was very beautiful and warm; it was simple indeed but still very beautiful.

The role of women in Sūqs

Social segregation – *Hammams* and coffee shops.

Women's social activities in the Sūqs.

Beautiful social relations.

- 8) So, when an engagement or wedding took place for example, was the Sūq the space for celebration and what are the customs, if any?

See long time ago there was, but I don't know if they still do them today. For example, when a man wants to buy his daughter's *trousseau* he goes to a merchant and asks his help in buying all the items. The merchant hires carts and walks in the street to the different shops buying all needed items. Following the carts are usually people playing music and drums, announcing to the Sūq goers that this is a bridal *trousseau*. I remember this happening long time ago; I saw it when I was 7-8 years old. But I am not sure if this still happens today, I doubt. This social life is incomparable.

Sūqs as spaces of celebration

- 9) How about the political life of the Sūq? You mentioned above something about the Israeli occupation, but was the Sūq ever a place for politics?

Of course. See, the problem with the people of Nablus is their tongue [giggle], they swear a lot and do not care about kings, presidents or Israel. But I have to mention something important here. The Jews, particularly those of the *Sameri* sect, are kind neighbours and they have an important district in the Sūq of Nablus. They are Palestinians and they love their country and their people. They are famous in the Sūqs for bookmaking and fortune-telling. I remember one of them called Sheikh Yacoub, he used to have a small shop and used to charge 5 piasters to read palms. This is one of the many fun things to do in the Sūq, you literally forget about time. That's why women used to cook at night so they can enjoy themselves in the Sūqs in the morning [laughing].

Religious minorities and their Sūq activities

- 10) Did women use to cover to go to the Sūq? Where there any harassments?

In Nablus no. Women used to go to the Sūq uncovered, maybe a small scarf on the head only. They used to put on makeup and dress fashionably, for the time of course. Not one person can bother a woman in the Sūq or even tell her 'good morning' without her permission.

(10:1) What would happen if anyone bothers a woman in the Sūq?

They will beat him up [laughing].

(10:2) And people used to know each other, for instance that this is the mother of X or daughter of Y?

Yes of course, they know each other. See, my sister left Nablus long time ago. When she visited back fifteen years later, one vendor in the Sūq greeted her 'Um-Abed'

Women and their Sūq activities/behaviour

Respect for women

Everyone knows everyone else

(Mother od Abed) thank God you are back safe. When she asked him how he still remembers her, he replied that she looks like our mother.

11) So, now let us talk a little about the Sūq's religious life, was there any mosque or church in the Sūq of Nablus?

Of course, many mosques. Actually, all of Nablus's historical mosques are there in the Sūq, there is also the church. In the Eastern side there are two mosques and in the Western part there is *Jami al-Khidr*. Of course, these are the traditional historical ones that were built with the Sūq. At the end of the Western part, there is a staircase that leads to the church, called the Church of Yacoub. It is perched above the Sūq and overlooks it. In Nablus, the Christians are a minority, not exceeding 1/1000. The Sumerian Jews do not have a synagogue in the Sūq of Nablus, because they believe their holy place to be on the nearby Mount of Jerzim.

(11:1) So, how about their celebrations, did they celebrate in the Sūq?

Yes, but depending on the feast. For example, they celebrate Easter in the Sūq. They make a special pastry that is baked in a specific store in the Sūq. See at the outskirts of the Sūq there were many bakeries, each specializing in a particular item. So, the Jews dealt with only one of these bakeries, for religious reasons. After they bake it, the first thing they do in Easter is to distribute the pastries on all the vendors in the Sūq.

12) What is a famous type food that is sold in the Sūqs of Nablus?

The *knafe* of course, this is the city's specialty. But see when many shops started making it in bulks, it started to lose its quality. Cooking *Knafe* in Nablus is an art, so when you turn it into a commercial item, it loses its artistic touch. But all sweet makers are very careful when they sell *Knafe* for the people of Nablus, because if they dislike it, he will be out of business in no time. I remember clearly when I was 12 years old, one *Knafe* maker in the Sūq of Nablus refused to sell me a piece because he said it was not the batch made for the local people. He offered me a free piece later in the day when he finished preparing the perfect batch of *Knafe* [laughing]. See, the commercial batches made in the morning are usually sold for the tourists or workers coming from other parts of the country. The afternoon batches (usually fewer) are reserved for locals, because it needs to be made carefully on low eat with specific ingredients.

Religious buildings in the Sūq.

Jewish celebrations in the Sūq.

Food is an art
Pride in making good food
Tradition

(12:1) Does it have a strong smell in the Sūq?

Yes of course. Aside from *Knafe*, the smell of pastry usually in the morning fills the air. Every morning, pastry mobile vendors also roam the Sūq carrying baskets filled with cheese or *zqatar* pastry. These are for a breakfast on the go. In the same time, coffee makers are also roaming with their cups and copper pots. They keep on clicking the cups to attract people ‘tick, tick, tick.’ Their coffee pots are very interesting, made up of two parts: the lower one has burning coal and the upper is a thermos of boiling coffee.

(12:2) And these coffee vendors make these pots?

No, they are made at different shops, those who make copper. But they brew their own coffee, that is important and that what makes one vendor’s coffee better than the other. So, you find in the morning first the pastry vendors followed by the coffee in a very nice atmosphere. There are also many restaurants at the domed intersections in the Sūq, particularly at the Southern Sūqs. See, from the main spines (Eastern/Western/Northern/Southern), they open small branches dedicated to the restaurants. Among these restaurants are the grilled meat vendors. The vendors of grilled meat there are very cunning [participant used an inappropriate word jokingly here]. Once they start working, they throw a piece of fat in the burning coal, filling the air with a delicious aroma. Everyone goes running to eat [laughing]... I remember my father during lunch time would take me to one of these grilled meat restaurants, when he does not feel like eating at home. So, we go to one of these small shops that sell grilled meat. Outside the shop they display the grilled food, and around it there are small tables and chairs for us to sit. Once we sit, the workers start bringing salads and take our order. There was no cheating, you eat delicious grilled meat. After that we have dessert at another shop, either *Knafe* or *Muhalabeyat Setto*. This is another traditional dessert, made with unsweetened milk and starch that is baked inside an oven. Once baked, syrup is poured on top. I used to make this sweet a lot for my visitors here in Dubai.

(12:3) What other food vendors are there also?

See, there are also many other traditional foods for breakfast in the Nablus Sūq. You can eat them in the street or take them home for the whole family to share. We have garlic pastry, *falafel*, *foul*, *hummus*, date pastry, each sold at a separate shop that specializes in these items. And the good thing is that none of these specialized food vendors would compete with the other, in other words, a *foul* vendor would not sell *falafel* or *hummus*. This way he will excel in his product and would allow others to master theirs too. I used

Food speciality of Nablus Sūq

Aromas of different products and vendors’ behaviour

Sounds in the Sūq

Specialized food vendors

to know a *foul* vendor called Khamees, he was known for his amazing *foul* platter. This specialty made him so famous, so he sold a lot and made lots of profit. He even bought 7 buildings in the area. This is because he dedicated himself to his profession and excelled in it. He was so famous to the extent that when King Hussein used to visit Nablus, he used to ask for Khamees's *foul*. His children after him took over the business and continued their father's legacy.

13) If ask you to describe to me one enduring memory that you have in the Sūq, what would it be?

A memory that I would not forget.... [pausing to remember] ... I have many. See, I was enrolled in a school located in the Western part of Nablus. Our house was at the East of Nablus. [Smiling]... see the naughty kids used to be sent to a school away from their district. Usually, by law, all kids had to attend schools near the homes. So, every day when I used to go out from school I choose to go through the older parts of the city and not its newer areas, even though the distance and time to reach back home would be shorter. Why shorter? Because then I would not have to stop at every shop to look around, but I loved the old city because it was full of life and memories. Every step you take there you smell the essence of tradition and life. I would be sneezing once I come near the spice shops [laughing], I would be filled with the smell of olive oil near the pressing factories... Everywhere you go you see something and smell something. One time I was going back home, I passed by an old crippled vendor called Abu-Yarmouk. The poor guy always sat on a small thatched stool in front of his small grocery shop. I used to buy from him lupin everyday with 1 piaster. He would be preparing them for me wrapped in a paper cone. It seems that one day he went to pray quickly and did not prepare my cone. His son was in the shop, so when I passed, he gave me unsweetened lupins [laughing]. I did not taste them at first, because of my brother's friends saw me and asked me to go with him home to collect a book for my brother. I went to their house, which was near the Sūq, but I was ashamed to enter. His small sister saw me and nagged to eat my lupins. Once she tasted them, she started spitting and crying [laughing]. I went back to Abu-Yarmouk and told him the story, he smiled and told me that he punished his son very badly for selling me those unsweetened lupins. He handed me a bigger cone, almost double the lupins I usually buy, and did not take any extra money.

Thank you so much for your time.

The Sūq is a sensory journey, full of memories and life.

Tradition - Heritage

Appendix B.1

Social Survey: Online Live Form

How Do You See Dubai and its Architectural Products?

Analysis of Socio-Urban Perception

* Required

Nationality *

Age Group *

- ☐ Below 20
- ☐ 20-30
- ☐ 30-40
- ☐ 40-50
- ☐ Above 50

In one word, how would you describe the city of Dubai? *

Would you or do you like living in Dubai? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Do you agree that Dubai is a unique place? *

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Agree ○ ○ ○ ○ Strongly Disagree

Are you a resident of Dubai? *

- ☐ Local citizen of Dubai
- ☐ Resident for less than 5 years
- ☐ Resident for more than 5 years
- ☐ Only visited Dubai
- ☐ Only know about it through media

Do you agree that Dubai is a promising city for both residency and/or work? *

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Agree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Disagree

How would you describe the population in Dubai? *

If you choose more than one option specify them in the 'Other' Box.

- ☐ Tolerant and easily co-living
- ☐ Conservative
- ☐ Discriminating
- ☐ Interesting Hybrid
- ☐ Superficial
- ☐ Unified by strict laws
- ☐ Other:

In one word, how do you describe the architecture of Dubai? *

Identify the following skyline: *

- ☐ Singapore
- ☐ Dubai
- ☐ New York



From the image above, which building best represents the city of Dubai? Why? *

For example, Al Bastakia, Burj Khalifa, Burj Al Arab ...etc.

What does the building (that you chose for the previous question) resemble? *

For example a car, a book, a flower ... etc.

If Dubai was a brand, which one would it be? *

Any commercial or exclusive brand like Gillette, Twix, Gucci, Mercedes ...etc.

Do you give me your permission to use your answers for academic research purposes? *

Participants names are not required and your personal information are to be kept autonomous in accordance to the ethical criteria set by the UK's Higher Education Committee

☐ Yes

☐ No

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Appendix B.2

Social Survey: Compiled Responses

The following pages are extracted from Google's survey results' spreadsheets. Because of some print limitations, the following outlines results for questions 1, 2, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13 and 14, including time stamp. Full results found at <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1ki0qY6DEv7gPcZ4RbNPxqYWjdeG2GIVvBWdd7WLUxGs/edit#gid=0>

	Timestamp	Nationality	Age Group	In one word, how would you describe the city of Dubai?	How would you describe the population in Dubai?	In one word, how do you describe the architecture of Dubai?	From the image above, which building best represents the city of Dubai? Why?	What does the building (that you chose for the previous question) resemble?	If Dubai was a brand, which one would it be?	Do you give me your permission to use your answers for academic research purposes?
1	3/19/2014 0:08	Jordan	30-40	Growing	Tolerant and easily co-living, Superficial, Unified by strict laws	Copied	Burj Khalifa	a needle	Rolex	Yes
2	3/19/2014 0:22	egyptian	20-30	modern	Discriminating, Superficial, Unified by strict laws	modern	Burj Khalifa	khazoo2	mercedes	Yes
3	3/19/2014 5:07	Canada/iraq	30-40	Dynamic	Interesting Hybrid	Nothing unique to Dubai	Burj Khalifa	A mirror	Versace - wants to always be in the headline	Yes
4	3/19/2014 7:47	Egyptian	30-40	Fake	Superficial	Disney	Emirates towers	Book	Gillette	Yes
5	3/19/2014 16:43	Egyptian	20-30	City of lights	Tolerant and easily co-living	Beautiful and well designed	Burj Khalifa, it marks the highest towers in the world.	Stairs to heaven	Mercedes	Yes
6	3/19/2014 16:45	jordanian	30-40	amazing	Tolerant and easily co-living	Great	Burj Khalifa	proud	dior	Yes
7	3/19/2014 18:02	Egyptian	30-40	Beautiful	Interesting Hybrid	Mixed	Burj Khalifa	A tower	Rolls roys	Yes
8	3/19/2014 17:57	Jardanian	30-40	Party :-)	Unified by strict laws	Party .. Dancing & dancing	Burj Khalifa .. It's the logo & land mark of a successful metropolian city	Rocket	Armani	Yes
9	3/19/2014 18:05	Jordanian	30-40	Ambitious	Discriminating	Neo classic	Burj Khalifa... cause the media focuses on burj Khalifa as being the tallest and most important feature in Dubai!!!	A flower	Armani	Yes
10	3/19/2014 18:12	JORDANIAN	30-40	amazing	Conservative	Awesome and like Las Vegas	Burj Khalifa because it is a good landmark	A larg thin glittery stick	Commercial	Yes
11	3/19/2014 18:58	Egyptian	40-50	Fantastic	Tolerant and easily co-living, Unified by strict laws	Epic	Burj Khalifa Because it's why people go to dubai	Flower	Ferrari	Yes
12	3/19/2014 19:31	sylan	30-40	home	Tolerant and easily co-living, Interesting Hybrid, Superficial	modern	burj Khalifa, thw how and when and where factors involved in its presence say it all	leadership	debeers	Yes
13	3/19/2014 19:37	russia	30-40	diverse	Interesting Hybrid	modern	Burj al Arab, well known hotel around the world	a sailing boat	something expensive and luxurious	Yes

14	3/19/2014 20:07	Egyptian	30-40	Cosmopolitan.	Tolerant and easily co-living	Modern!	Burj Khalifa, the world's tallest building; representing Dubai's unique innovation and architectural vision.	A flower.	An airline, specifically Emirates' "Keep Discovering".	Yes
15	3/19/2014 20:48	Lebanese	30-40	Enchanting	Tolerant and easily co-living	Creative	Burj Khalifa & emirates towers	Rocket & book pages respectively	Ferrari	Yes
16	3/19/2014 20:54	lebanese	20-30	city of life	Tolerant and easily co-living	brilliant	Burj Khalifa describes the uniqueness of dubai for it being the tallest building in the world which helped dubai focus on achieving more and more through hosting the expo2020	skyscrapers	Mercedes	Yes
17	3/19/2014 21:33	Egyptian	30-40	Life style	Interesting Hybrid	Unique	Emirates Towers It has a Strong geometry	Pyramids	Lexus	Yes
18	3/19/2014 22:00	Egyptian	20-30	Home	Mixed between the first two	Different	Burj Khalifa, the biggest in earth!	A stick	Rolls Royce	Yes
19	3/19/2014 22:02	Indian	Below 20	Luxurious	Tolerant and easily co-living, Discriminating, Interesting Hybrid	Sharp	Burj Khalifa It is one of the heroic buildings in Dubai and stands as an icon of not only the city but the country. It is a giant shard standing rather majestically between a crowd of brilliant, sharp architecture. It represents power and Dubai's flexibility towards extremity and competition.	A sword, a giant spire rising on the cityscape	It is a Prada	Yes
20	3/19/2014 22:13	Iraqi	20-30	Light	Interesting Hybrid	Astonishing	Burj Khalifa, unique, iconic and heroic	Sharp ice drop	Dior	Yes
21	3/19/2014 22:42	Saudi	30-40	Exciting	Interesting Hybrid	Innovative	Burj Dubai iconic landmark	Metal bundle	Apple	Yes
22	3/19/2014 22:57	Egyptian	40-50	urban city	Tolerant and easily co-living	modern	Burj Khalifa, it is the latest and highest building in Dubai	rocket	Mercedes	Yes
23	3/19/2014 23:04	Saudi	30-40	Ambitious	Interesting Hybrid	Unoriginal	Burj Khalifa, iconic & unique	Stairs to heaven	Victoria Secret	Yes
24	3/19/2014 23:25	Jordanian	20-30	diversed	Conservative, Interesting Hybrid, Superficial	beautiful	Burj Khalifa, its the tallest building in life.	Injection needle	Mercedez	Yes

25	3/19/2014 23:33	Lebanese	Below 20	Magnificent	Interesting Hybrid, Unified by strict laws	Fast	Although Burj Khalifa is the pinnacle of the architectural achievement in Dubai, I personally love Emirates Towers. It plays an important role whether it is a skyline or as a monument on Sheikh Zayed Road (the main highway of Dubai). Emirates Towers is a key representative of Dubai's identity.	Key picking kit	Addas	Yes
26	3/19/2014 23:54	Egyptian	30-40	Home	Tolerant and easily co-living	Extravagant	Emirates towers.	Hotel	Dior	Yes
27	3/20/2014 0:10	Iranian	Below 20	Sparkling	Discriminating, Superficial, Unified by strict laws, materialistic, westernized,	uniquely copied and pasted in a different format from other architects	Burj Khalifa would be the icon of Dubai because by far Dubai has been having the most outstanding buildings which have been copied and developed and pasted in different textures. Even though the building is unique and elegant yet it is still a copy paste of many famous buildings. the down side of burj Khalifa is that it does not "resemble" much of use nor Dubai because it only shows the westernized side of Dubai while the color or the shape could have been designed in a way to make people foreign people living in other countries remember Dubai and its culture	the steps of development of Dubai	Tumblr, it might not be a brand but is a website with variety of images and different sources attracting people from different ages everyday and truly its addictive	Yes
28	3/20/2014 0:23	Lebanese	20-30	Home	Superficial	Crazy	Burj Khalifa	A tower	Lamborghini	Yes
29	3/20/2014 0:52	saudi	30-40	growing	Interesting Hybrid	glorious	Burj Khalifa	Rocket	Nutella	Yes

30	3/20/2014 1:12	Lebanese	Below 20	City of life	Tolerant and easily co-living	Breathtaking	Burj Khalifa, as it's the tallest building in the world	A rocket	Bugatti	Yes
31	3/20/2014 1:38	Lebanese	20-30	Magical	Interesting Hybrid	Beautiful	Burj al Arab, even though it is very small in the picture is more of an icon for the city of Dubai	Boat	Mercedes	Yes
32	3/20/2014 2:11	Egyptian	20-30	Luxurious	Tolerant and easily co-living, Superficial	Detailed	Burka Khalifa Cause it's the highest tower in the world which makes Dubai unique and that's what they want.	A city	Apple - up to date brand	Yes
33	3/20/2014 4:59	korean	30-40	mixture of arabic& other culture	Conservative , Interesting Hybrid	Interesting	Before burj al alarab, Now burj khalifa- 1. It is the highest building in the world 2. Most seen in the new movie	cylinder block	samsung	Yes
34	3/20/2014 4:27	Saudi	40-50	Amazing	Tolerant and easily co-living	Modern	Burj Khalifa	City	Mercedes binz	Yes
35	3/20/2014 9:40		30-40	Alive	Tolerant and easily co-living	Massive	Borj Khalifa	Money	Gucci	Yes
36	3/20/2014 9:40	Netherlands	Above 50	The impossible	Tolerant and easily co-living	Show off	Burj Khalifa	Drop of water	Apple	Yes
37	3/20/2014 13:31	Egyptian	20-30	Development	Tolerant and easily co-living, Unified by strict laws	Creative	Burj Khalifa , tallest building in the world	Flower,rocket	Ferrari	Yes
38	3/20/2014 13:59		Below 20	Business	Tolerant and easily co-living	Modern	Burj Khalifa, publicity and advertising has made this Dubai's icon and anything associated with it is associated with Dubai.	A needle	Gillette	Yes
39	3/20/2014 15:16	Egyptian	30-40	Elegance	Unified by strict laws	unique	Burj Khalifa	rocket	Mercedes	Yes
40	3/20/2014 14:36	Filipino	30-40	Great	Tolerant and easily co-living	Confused	Emirates towers	Sails	Mcqueen	Yes
41	3/20/2014 14:45	Filipino	20-30	Multicultural	Superficial	Diverse	Burj Khalifa because it's very distinct and it's what differentiates Dubai's skyline from other cities.	An icicle	Swarovski	Yes
42	3/20/2014 15:00	Egyptian	20-30	City of life	Conservative	Limitless	Burj Khalifa Highest rise-building in the world...most advanced sorta like Dubai in comparison to the rest of the Middle East if not the world.	Pencil	Bentley	Yes
43	3/20/2014 15:29	Canadian	20-30	Superficial	Superficial	Modern	Burj Khalifa. Highest rise-building in the world...most advanced sorta like Dubai in comparison to the rest of the Middle East if not the world.	A needle	Armani	Yes

44	3/20/2014 15:31	Jordanian	20-30	Materialistic	Tolerant and easily co-living	Inspirational	Burj Khalifa	A car	Chanel	Yes
45	3/20/2014 17:59	Jordanian	Below 20	Advancing	A mix of all, since dubai is very diverse in cultures and nationalities	Innovative	In the past, it was Burj Al Arab because its the only 7 star hotel in the world. Which means it holds a world record, plus the design of the building is extremely unique and modern. Now, it obviously is the Burj Khalifa, because it holds the record of the tallest skyscraper in the world, not to mention is beautiful design. Dubai is known for breaking records, and I'm sure it will continue to do so, especially architecturally.	Burj Al Arab: A ship, representing the initial growth of Dubai and the fact that it's on the beach. Burj Khalifa: I don't know	Google	Yes
46	3/20/2014 19:05	Jordanian	20-30	Modern	Tolerant and easily co-living, Interesting Hybrid, Superficial	Interesting	Burj Khalifa. It has that great structure between all of the buildings.	Different angles of a certain shape	Prada	Yes
47	3/20/2014 19:36	Jordanian	30-40	Amazing	Interesting Hybrid	Amazing	Burj Khalifa	Building	Mercedes	Yes
48	3/21/2014 1:09	lebanon	20-30	amazing	Interesting Hybrid	wonderfull	Burj Khalifa cause its highest blding in the world and the view	a car	gass	Yes
49	3/21/2014 7:37	USA	40-50	Disney	Interesting Hybrid, also racist color determines payscale	economical	Burj Khalifa because it's the latest building to garner much press. It is the "1st", tallest, fastest, shiniest, coolest... These labels are what matter here. However I do like the Emirates Towers because they are a pair and interact with one another.	Stalactite	Lamborghini	Yes
50	3/21/2014 16:10	Egyptian	30-40	Comfortable	Tolerant and easily co-living	Innovative	Burj Khalifa, unique and a trade mark for the city	A rocket	Armani	Yes
51	3/21/2014 16:24		30-40	Promising	Tolerant and easily co-living	Modern	Burj Khalifa	flower	Boss	Yes

52	3/21/2014 16:25	lebanese	30-40	soul-less	Superficial	modern	The Emirates Towers. Dubai both inside out. They are one of the first beautiful towers to go up.	a ruler	Versace	Yes
53	3/21/2014 16:58	Uae	30-40	Amazing	Interesting Hybrid, Cosmopolitan	Futuristic	Burj Khalifa. Because it demonstrates the city's ability to be the great, resilient, luxurious and beautiful.	A magic stick	Louis vuitton	Yes
54	3/21/2014 18:12		30-40	Progressive	Interesting Hybrid	Boring	Burj Khalifa. Towering above the rest.	A shining rod.	Gucci.	Yes
55	3/21/2014 21:49		40-50	work in progress	Interesting Hybrid	stunning	Burj Khalifa, world's tallest.	phallus	Red Bull	Yes
56	3/21/2014 22:52	Jordanian	20-30	Fake	Interesting Hybrid, Superficial	Modern	Burj Khalifa	a book	Louis Vuitton	Yes
57	3/21/2014 23:20	Egypt	30-40	Wonderful	Superficial	Iconic	Burj Khalifa	A pen	Armani	Yes
58	3/22/2014 2:10	Jordanian	30-40	Life	Interesting Hybrid	Good	Burj Khalifa , one of a kind	Progress	Microsoft	Yes
59	3/22/2014 1:17	Indian	30-40	Spirited	Tolerant and easily co-living	Modern	Burj Khalifa	Antenna	Tag	Yes
60	3/22/2014 5:18	Afghanistan	30-40	Materialistic	Mixture of all of the above	Beautiful	Burj Khalifa	sky scraper	Porche	Yes
61	3/22/2014 5:29	palestinian	30-40	interesting	Tolerant and easily co-living	great	Burj Khalifa , coz its a unique bldg architecturally	jewel	berthy	Yes
62	3/22/2014 13:21	German	20-30	extreme	Superficial, Unified by strict laws	extreme	Burj Alarab, because it's THE architectural Landmark	a sail	prada	Yes, No
63	3/22/2014 10:31	Lebanese	30-40	Salad Bowl	Descriminating	Confusing	Burj Khalifa, because it's the most prominent image in the skyline in terms of height, and it's promoted as an icon of dubai all over the world	the tip of a pen	Jaguar	Yes
64	3/22/2014 13:00	Lebanese	30-40	Future	Tolerant and easily co-living, Interesting Hybrid	World-class	Burj Khalifa	A flower	Maseratti	Yes
65	3/22/2014 14:39	iran	Below 20	fast growing	Descriminating, Superficial, fake	unrelated	the emirates towers the shape is unique, not copied from the west i feel like it has a story behind it	gun	Channel	Yes
66	3/22/2014 16:40	Jordan	30-40	Fighter	Tolerant and easily co-living, Interesting Hybrid, Unified by strict laws	Sexy	Burj Khalifa cuz it placed Dubai on the map and cuz it is an instantly recognizable icon	A spire	Perrier Jouet - expensive champagne	Yes

67	3/22/2014 17:13	Pakistan	30-40	Growing	Descominating Unified by strict laws	Amazing	Burj Khalifa being the tallest that's why	Rocket	Mercedes	Yes
68	3/23/2014 8:53	Jordanian	20-30	Amazing	Unified by strict laws	Beautiful	Burj Khalifa	I don't know	Unilever	Yes
69	3/23/2014 8:54	Jordanian	20-30	Amazing	Unified by strict laws	Beautiful	Burj Khalifa	I don't know	Unilever	Yes
70	3/23/2014 9:22	USA	40-50	contradictory	Superficial	lacking	Burj Khalifa, Dubai looks outwards, not inwards, so the tallest is bragging rights, yet does it have proper sewage yet?, or is it still trucked?	lego	rolex knockoff	Yes
71	3/23/2014 9:59	Indian	Below 20	Lively	Tolerant and easily co-living, Interesting Hybrid	Self-righteous	Burj Khalifa has become the current icon of Dubai. Before this, it was Burj Al Arab. These monuments serve as an identity to the country. The Burj Al Arab portrayed Dubai's need to accomplish the seemingly impossible (aka building a towering hotel in the water), yet still it kept in mind Dubai's heritage (the sail design of Dubai's fisherman boats). Burj Khalifa, however, is a step in a another direction. It represents Dubai stance in the world, summarizes it's development and growing wealth, and puts Dubai on the map.	Burj Khalifa - a pen standing up. Burj Al Arab - a sail	Mercedes	Yes
72	3/23/2014 11:14	Canadian	20-30	Luxurious	Tolerant and easily co-living	Marvelous	Burj Al Arab, it is the only 7 star hotel in the world, and it looks like the sail of a ship.	Sail of a ship	Rolls Royce	Yes
73	3/23/2014 11:40	Syrian	20-30	perfect	Tolerant and easily co-living, Interesting Hybrid	innovative	Burj Khalifa, because it shows how Dubai is always ahead of others since its the tallest tower.	a flower	Audi	Yes
74	3/23/2014 11:43	Iranian	20-30	Small	Superficial	Competitive	Burj Khalifa, it is Dubai's pride	Idk	Mercedes	Yes

75	3/23/2014 11:49	Jordan	30-40	Advanced	Interesting Hybrid	Modern	Burj Al Arab because it resembles a unique position and status. It conveys to public that "we" in Dubai can go beyond the norms and build the first 7 star hotel on a man made island. No one will ever beat that.	A sail of a boat	Apple	Yes
76	3/23/2014 11:46	Indian	20-30	glamorous	Interesting Hybrid	interesting	Burj Khalifa because it is one of the tallest buildings in the world and it shows the glamour and luxurious side of Dubai.	ladder	Ammani	Yes
77	3/23/2014 12:08	lebanese	20-30	prospering	Discriminating, Interesting Hybrid, Superficial, Unified by strict laws	inspiring	Burj Khalifa	flower	mercedes	Yes
78	3/23/2014 12:09	lebanese	20-30	prospering	Discriminating, Interesting Hybrid, Superficial, Unified by strict laws	inspiring	Burj Khalifa	flower	mercedes	Yes
79	3/23/2014 13:13	Jordanian	20-30	city of evolution	Interesting Hybrid	Contemporary Architecture	Burj Khalifa	n/a	n/a	Yes
80	3/24/2014 0:20	Egyptian	20-30	Glamorous	Interesting Hybrid	Modern	Burj Al Arab	Tree	Hermes	Yes
81	3/23/2014 23:15	Jordanian	Below 20	Disney Land	Tolerant and easily co-living	Modern	Burj Khalifa. The Burj Khalifa skyscraper is a world-class destination and the magnificent centerpiece of Downtown Dubai, Dubai's new urban masterpiece.	Art Deco	Mercedes	Yes
82	3/24/2014 0:41	مصري	20-30	مشقة	Superficial	شهر	برج خليفة .. لأنه أمر رائع شيء ف البناء، فهو مشرق يتركه أطول أبراج العالم	zigzag	البنة	Yes
83	3/24/2014 0:51	Egyptian	20-30	Commercial	Interesting Hybrid	Huge	Burj Khalifa. I think that a big number of the UAE people consider it a representative of the city, just as the Eiffel tower represents Paris.	I don't really know	Audi	Yes
84	3/24/2014 9:53	lebanese	20-30	amazing	Tolerant and easily co-living	beautiful	burj khalifa	stick	mercedes	Yes

85	3/24/2014 9:56	Lebanese	20-30	Luxurious	Unified by strict laws	Modern	Burj Khalifa	Flower	Gucci	Yes
86	3/24/2014 11:45	Egyptian	30-40	Technology	Tolerant and easily co-living, Conservative	Amazing	Burj Khalifa, its location is very unique and also the architect	Rocket	Ferrari	Yes
87	3/24/2014 11:56	Afghan	20-30	glamour	Interesting Hybrid	overpowering	Burj Khalifa its the tallest	a flower when seen from above	chanel	Yes
88	3/24/2014 12:05	Jordanian	20-30	Modern	Superficial, Unified by strict laws	Dynamic	Burj Khalifa	A rocket	Meccedes	Yes
89	3/24/2014 12:15	Lebanese	Below 20	Luxurious	Tolerant and easily co-living, Unified by strict laws	Modern	Burj Khalifa , the tallest tower in the world	Sword	Lamborghini	Yes
90	3/24/2014 12:16	Indian	Below 20	Bustling	Tolerant and easily co-living	Modern	Burj Khalifa	A Needle	Mercedes	Yes
91	3/24/2014 12:18	canadian	Below 20	powerful	Interesting Hybrid	power	Burj Khalifa	power	channel	Yes
92	3/24/2014 12:20	kuwaiti/bahraini	20-30	Interesting	Interesting Hybrid	amazing	Burj Khalifa because its the tallest	a flower	mercedes	Yes
93	3/24/2014 12:22	Egyptian	Below 20	love	Tolerant and easily co-living	Powerful	Burj Khalifa	a growing flower	Mercedes	Yes
94	3/24/2014 12:24	Egyptian	20-30	Ambitious	Conservative , Interesting Hybrid, Superficial	Towers	Burj Al Arab	Sail	Dubai	Yes
95	3/24/2014 12:27	Egyptian	20-30	height	Interesting Hybrid	height	Al Bastakia, because that is the oldest place in dubai.	book	bugati	Yes
96	3/24/2014 14:05	Lebanese	20-30	Fake	Superficial	Modern	Burj Khalifa	Expensive tooth pick	Bobs trying to be tons	Yes
97	3/24/2014 14:30	Egyptian	Above 50	unique	Tolerant and easily co-living	interesting	Burj Khalifa, For the simple & unique architecture and creative engineering	a rocket	amani	Yes
98	3/24/2014 15:28	Egyptian	20-30	Magical	Tolerant and easily co-living	Amazing	Burj al arab	The culture's simplicity	Tim hortons	Yes
99	3/24/2014 16:10	british	20-30	dream	Conservative	fantastic	burj khalifa	pencil	prada	Yes
100	3/24/2014 16:50	Uae	20-30	Future	Intelligent	Futuristic	Burj Khalifa and emirates towers, because there design is memorable and unique enough to make the image stay in mind very strongly	I don't understand the question	Bugatti	Yes
101	3/24/2014 16:20	Egyptian	Below 20	Booming	Tolerant and easily co-living	Impressive	Burj Khalifa	Power	Mercedes G	Yes
102	3/24/2014 17:34	Portuguese	20-30	Great	Interesting Hybrid	Amazing	Burj Khalifa	A car	Rolls Royce	Yes
103	3/24/2014 17:46	Syrian	20-30	Beautiful	Tolerant and easily co-living	Amazing	Burj Khalifa	Dubai	Gucci	Yes
104	3/24/2014 17:51	Palestinian	Below 20	Modern	Interesting Hybrid	Too modern	Burj Khalifa	Nothing	Havanas	Yes

105	3/24/2014 19:42	Jordanian	20-30	Free	Tolerant and easily co-living	Growing	Burj Khalifa, since it is the tallest building in the world, Dubai became more famous after it got built.	A sculpture	Mercedes	Yes
106	3/24/2014 19:48	Egyptian	Below 20	Progressive	Tolerant and easily co-living, Superficial	Magnificent	Emirates towers, they show how dubai can be suitable for both business and leisure	A classic car	Rolls Royce	Yes
107	3/24/2014 20:52	Maltese	30-40	Alive	Interesting Hybrid	Progressive	Burj Khalifa	Mountain	Gucci	Yes
108	3/24/2014 20:55	Maltese	20-30	Amazing	Tolerant and easily co-living	Modern	Burj Khalifa the famous tallest building	A needle	Dior	Yes
109	3/24/2014 21:20	Jordanian	20-30	Cool	Conservative , Unified by strict laws	Crazy	Burj Khalifa	Rocket	Hermes	Yes
110	3/24/2014 21:41	Australian	Above 50	Impressive	Tolerant and easily co-living	Progressive	Burj Khalifa height	Needle	Tiffany's	Yes
111	3/24/2014 21:41	Australian	Above 50	Futuristic	Tolerant and easily co-living, Conservative	Futuristic	Burj Khalifa	A castle	Pepsi	Yes
112	3/25/2014 1:23	Jordanian	20-30	Beautiful	Tolerant and easily co-living	Unique	Burj Khalifa . It's the known worldwide and represents the city.	A tower	Rolls Royce	Yes
113	3/25/2014 2:02	Jordan	20-30	ambitious	Tolerant and easily co-living	wonderful	Burj Khalifa, because it is the tallest building tower in the world	a flower	hermes	Yes
114	3/25/2014 6:52	Lebanese	20-30	Luxurious	Interesting Hybrid	Futuristic	Burj Khalifa, because it is a very unique landmark in the city	A shooting star	A very exclusive brand	Yes
115	3/25/2014 9:32	Serbian	30-40	interesting	Tolerant and easily co-living	lacking	Burj Al Arab Because it put Dubai on the World map	sail	samsung	Yes
116	3/25/2014 13:56	Lebanon	20-30	Amazing	Interesting Hybrid	Unique	Burj Khalifa	Skyline	Gucci	Yes
117	3/25/2014 16:44	Croatian	30-40	grand	Interesting Hybrid	pretentious	Burj Khalifa	A mountain	Gucci	Yes
118	3/25/2014 17:13	Egyptian	30-40	Magnificent	Superficial	Advanced	Twin towers	A chocolate bar	Lv	Yes
119	3/25/2014 17:19	lebanese	20-30	cosmopolitan	Interesting Hybrid	skyscrapers	Burj Khalifa	a tower	armani	Yes
120	3/25/2014 17:57	dubai UAE	20-30	evolving	Discriminating	complex	Burj Khalifa, tallest building in the world, most attractive one as a view	a car or a pencil	mercedes	Yes
121	3/25/2014 22:41	American	30-40	Gorgeous	Interesting Hybrid, Diverse	Unique	Burj Khalifa Because of it's unique structure	A flower	Porche	Yes

122	3/26/2014 10:08	Canadian	30-40	Fake	Discriminating, Superficial	Trying	Burj Khalifa and burj al Arab both represent Dubai in the sense that they're both useless displays of money, created and built by someone else's blood and sweat only to try and prove a point.	A needle	Walmart	Yes
123	3/26/2014 10:45	american	20-30	unique	Tolerant and easily co-living	advanced	Burj Khalifa	a tower	amani	Yes
124	3/26/2014 10:48	Lebanese	20-30	Different	Tolerant and easily co-living	Beautiful	Burj Khalifa	Tallest building in the world	Maserati	Yes
125	3/26/2014 10:50	Lebanese	20-30	Amazing	Interesting Hybrid	Urban	Burj Khalifa	A flag pole	Rolex	Yes
126	3/26/2014 10:52	Lebanese	20-30	Dream	Tolerant and easily co-living	Different	Burj Khalifa, because they started from nothing and now they own the tallest building in the world.	Tallest building in the world	Mercedes	Yes
127	3/26/2014 11:34	lebanese	20-30	active	Tolerant and easily co-living	unique	Burj Khalifa. Because it's the tallest building in the world	success of the use	LV	Yes
128	3/26/2014 12:30	Syrian	20-30	Luxury	Tolerant and easily co-living, Superficial	Modern	Burj Khalifa	Flower	Gucci	Yes
129	3/26/2014 12:36	Indian	20-30	Diverse	Interesting Hybrid	Modern	The burj Khalifa	A flower	Chanel	Yes
130	3/26/2014 12:41	Lebanese	30-40	Luxurious	Interesting Hybrid, Superficial	Modern	Burj Khalifa, since it gave it a world wide recognition to the city.	Alien space station	Ferrari	Yes
131	3/26/2014 12:49	Jordanian	Below 20	Multicultural	Tolerant and easily co-living	Outstanding	Burj Khalifa	A flower	Gucci	Yes
132	3/26/2014 12:52	Lebanese	Below 20	Amazing	Discriminating, Superficial	Repetitive	Burj Khalifa	I don't know	Louis	Yes
133	3/26/2014 13:11	Lebanese	20-30	Modern	Tolerant and easily co-living	Beautiful	Burj Khalifa, tallest burj in Dubai	Book	Gucci	Yes
134	3/26/2014 15:56	Iranian	20-30	Beautiful	Tolerant and easily co-living	Modern	Burj Khalifa, tallest burj Khalifa because it kind of shows dominance over the other skyscrapers which is what Dubai and the use in general strives for.	Dubai	Dior	Yes
135	3/26/2014 14:06	nigerian	Below 20	structural	Unified by strict laws	skyline architecture		a fa lower turnt upside down	mercedes	Yes
136	3/26/2014 15:58	Iranian	Below 20	Luxurious	Tolerant and easily co-living, Interesting Hybrid, Unified by strict laws	Satisfactory	Burj Khalifa	A missile	Mercedes Benz	Yes
137	3/26/2014 20:19	USA	30-40	Mix of west and east	Tolerant and easily co-living	Eclectic	Burj Khalifa	An ancient Iraqi tower	Tesla- something new and quickly gaining popularity	Yes

138	3/27/2014 14:18	Lebanese	Below 20	Future	Populated	Astonishing	Burj al arab , because its located between jumalah and marina which for me are the best cities in dubai , and the burj is shaped in the B letter that represents dubai and its luxurious and beautiful	Dubai	Rolex	Yes
139	3/27/2014 14:49	Emirati	20-30	Beautiful	Tolerant and easily co-living	Phenomenal	Burj Khalifa. First, it got a very high exposure to the world. It's unique and significant. Dubai is changing positively on a daily basis and it rapidly developed to be one of the most beautiful cities in the world. Burj Khalifa's significance is somehow the most suitable building to represent Dubai.	Ladder	Graff Diamonds	Yes
140	3/27/2014 19:08	Kuwaiti	Below 20	busy	Tolerant and easily co-living, Interesting Hybrid, Superficial	amazing	Burj Khalifa because by its unique outside shape it is easily distinguished and it is one of the main things that make up dubai	flower	Louis Vuitton	Yes
141	3/27/2014 18:01	Belg	20-30	Modern	Conservative	Contemporary	Burj Khalifa , because it's known to be the tallest tower in the world and it's located here in dubai	Flower (tulip)	Mercedes	Yes
142	3/27/2014 18:02	Egyptian	20-30	Global	Tolerant and easily co-living	Unique	Burj Khalifa	Building	Rolls	Yes
143	3/30/2014 13:44	Syrian	Below 20	Metropolitan	Interesting Hybrid	Contrast	Burj Khalifa	A rocket	Mercedes	Yes
144	3/30/2014 14:10	Indian	20-30	glamorous	Interesting Hybrid	Interesting	Burj Khalifa because of the glamour and class that it adds to the city.	ladder	Armani	Yes
145	3/30/2014 14:10	Jordanian	Below 20	Alive	Interesting Hybrid	Modern	Burj Khalifa	A needle	Bugatti	Yes
146	3/30/2014 14:12	Indian	30-40	Good	Superficial, Unified by strict laws	Good	Burj Khalifa	Rocket	Apple	Yes
147	3/30/2014 14:18	lebanese	20-30	Developing	Interesting Hybrid	Average	Burj Khalifa, since it holds the record for the tallest tower in the world.	A tower	Samsung	Yes

148	3/30/2014 14:55	Indian	20-30	glamorous	Interesting Hybrid	flashy	Burj Khalifa	flower	yes	Yes
149	3/30/2014 15:38	Egyptian	20-30	Unique	Conservative , Discriminating, Interesting Hybrid, Superficial	Amusing	All of them do because this skyline is what describes what Dubai looks like in 1 pic	Dubai	Kia/Hyundai (new and successful)	Yes
150	3/30/2014 16:18	Egyptian	20-30	Adventure	Unified by strict laws	Modern	Burj Khalifa because it's the worlds tallest building	Rocket	Rolls royce	Yes
151	3/30/2014 16:25	Lebanese	30-40	Business	Tolerant and easily co-living	Wonderful	Burj Alarab, it was the most popular in Dubai before Burj Khalifa	Prestige	Bentley	Yes
152	3/30/2014 19:39	Iranian/Emirati	20-30	luxury	Interesting Hybrid	modern	Burj Khalifa, most advertized due to its status, slowly turning it into a well known landmark such as the effiel tower, sydney opera house, etc	supposedly a flower, since that is infact what the architects have described it as, however that resemblance isnt clear to me. in my own opinion, it looks like double sided steps.	maserati	Yes
153	3/30/2014 20:38	Lebanese	30-40	Organized	Discriminating	Monotonous	Burj Khalifa ... Highest ever...yet	A rocket	Bentley	Yes
154	3/30/2014 20:53	palestine	20-30	Amazing	Tolerant and easily co-living	beauty	Burj Khalifa	car	bugati	Yes
155	3/30/2014 21:16	Portuguese	30-40	Beautiful	Tolerant and easily co-living, Unified by strict laws	Crazy	Burj Khalifa	Diamond stick	Mercedes	Yes
156	3/30/2014 21:31	Jordan	20-30	Beauty	Discriminating	Professional	Burj alarab	Car	Maserati	Yes
157	3/31/2014 0:56	Lebanese	20-30	Incredible	Tolerant and easily co-living	Impressive	Burj Khalifa cause it's an icon	Rocket	Rolex	Yes
158	3/31/2014 0:51	Lebanon	40-50	Prestigious	Conservative	Beautiful	Palm Jumeirah, the most classy place anyone can visit	Book	Ferrari	Yes
159	3/31/2014 8:12	Indian	20-30	incredible	Tolerant and easily co-living	Massive	Burj Khalifa	a tower	gucci	Yes
160	3/30/2014 23:59	Lebanon	30-40	phenomenon	Conservative , Unified by strict laws	Challenging	Burj Khalifa, its still the highest tower in the world	needle	Ferrari	Yes
161	3/31/2014 10:33	lebanese	20-30	home	Tolerant and easily co-living	beautiful	Burj Khalifa . it shows "dream big, achieve big"	very tall tree	Ferrari	Yes
162	3/31/2014 10:45	Australian	30-40	Crazy	Interesting Hybrid	Random	Burj Khalifa .	Rocket	Marc Jacob	Yes
163	3/31/2014 12:58	Kenya	30-40	Good	Tolerant and easily co-living, Superficial, Unified by strict laws	Amazing	Burj Khalifa	An arrow	Sony	Yes
164	3/31/2014 14:09	Jordanian	40-50	Incredible	Unified by strict laws	Great	Burj Khalifa Cause you can see it from every where.	Fast and strong Vision	Bentley	Yes

165	4/1/2014 11:00	Lebanese	30-40	Amazing	Tolerant and easily co-living Unified by strict laws	Amazing	Burj Khalifa	Flower	Gucci	Yes
166	4/1/2014 11:07	UAE	20-30	Innovative		Fascinating	Burj Khalifa	Glory	Mercedes	Yes
167	4/1/2014 21:41	Angolan	20-30	Vibrant	Tolerant and easily co-living	Daring	Burj Khalifa, because it's a public statement of Dubai's continuous efforts to be the best at whatever task they set out to achieve.	an obelisk	Nike	Yes
168	4/3/2014 13:24	Jordanian	Below 20	Different	Interesting Hybrid	Beautiful	Burj Khalifa	A rocket	Gucci	Yes
169	4/4/2014 13:18	Lebanese	20-30	ecstatic	Superficial, Unified by strict laws	unlimited	Burj Khalifa as a priority, emirates towers and burj al arab come after.	Burj Khalifa looks like vertical lines put together.	mountain dew	Yes
170	4/4/2014 18:56	Egyptian	20-30, 30-40	Amazing	Tolerant and easily co-living	Creative	Burj Khalifa tallest building in the world	A rocket	Ferrari	Yes
171	4/4/2014 19:00	Egyptian	30-40	Brilliant	Superficial	Creative	Burj Khalifa, tallest ever	Rocket	Gucci	Yes
172	4/4/2014 19:04	Egyptian	Below 20	Artificial	Superficial	Good	Burj Khalifa	Sword	Lamborghini	Yes
173	4/4/2014 19:09	Vietnamese	30-40	Luxurious	Tolerant and easily co-living, Interesting Hybrid, Superficial, Unified by strict laws	Modern	Burj al arab	A whale	Mercedes	Yes
174	4/4/2014 19:27	Jordanian	30-40	dynamic	Tolerant and easily co-living, Interesting Hybrid	contemporary	Burj al arab	sail	Ferrari	Yes
175	4/5/2014 13:18	Lebanese	Below 20	Mesmerizing	Tolerant and easily co-living, Interesting Hybrid, Unified by strict laws	Grandiose	The Burj Al Arab Its design that resembles the sail of a ship is a sign that Dubai is staying connected to its roots while transforming into a more sophisticated and modern city.	Sail of a ship	Louis Vuitton	Yes
176	4/5/2014 14:36	Lebanese	Above 50	Different	Tolerant and easily co-living, Unified by strict laws	Outstanding	Burj Khalifa	Pride	Range rover	Yes
177	4/5/2014 15:17	Jordanian	20-30	Crazy	Superficial	Ugly	Burj Khalifa because its new and creating the new image of dubai	Flower	Dolce and Gabbana	Yes
178	4/5/2014 15:25	Lebanese	20-30	Easy	Unified by strict laws	Copycats	Burj Khalifa because its the tallest tower in the world	Flower	Galaxy	Yes
179	4/5/2014 15:30	Egyptian	20-30	Fast	Tolerant and easily co-living	Quick	Burj al arab	Boat	Porsche	Yes
180	4/5/2014 15:33	Armenian	40-50	On going	Tolerant and easily co-living	Nice	Burj al arab	Ship	Mercedes	Yes

181	4/5/2014 15:34	Lebanese	Below 20	Amazing	Conservative , Unified by strict laws	Overwhelming	Burj Khalifa	Needle	Lacoste	Yes
182	4/7/2014 21:10	Canada	30-40	Crowded	Tolerant and easily co-living	Interesting	Burj Khalifa	Rocket	Mercedes	Yes
183	4/7/2014 21:21	UAE	20-30	Fancy	Interesting Hybrid	Big	Burj Khalifa, the tallest	A rocket	Mercedes	Yes
184	4/8/2014 16:14	egyptian	20-30	Home	Tolerant and easily co-living	Mesmerizing	Burj El Arab, i have witnessed it to be one of the first landmarks to identify dubai	Power	Bugatti	Yes
185	4/10/2014 3:21	Syria	30-40	real estate	Tolerant and easily co-living	supernatural	Burj Khalifa	flower	Dubai	Yes
186	4/10/2014 0:27	Lebanese	30-40	Classy	Superficial, Unified by strict laws	Luxurious	Burj Khalifa cause it represents the multicultural image of dubai. The whole world is in Burj Khalifa.	A rocket	Rolex	Yes
187	4/10/2014 18:17	South Africa	40-50	work in progress	Interesting Hybrid, Discriminating, Double standard, Hypocritical.	Interesting	Burj Khalifa. Impressive.	Tower of babel	Red Bull	Yes
188	4/11/2014 21:34	pakistani	30-40	A gift of ALLAH	Tolerant and easily co-living, Unified by strict laws	wonderfull	Burj Khalifa	a car	BMW	Yes
189	4/17/2014 10:53	Egyptian	30-40	Business city	Tolerant and easily co-living	Improving	Burj Khalifa, tallest tower worldwide	Tower	Not at all	Yes
190	4/21/2014 0:40	Egyptian	30-40	perfect	Tolerant and easily co-living, Superficial, Unified by strict laws	up to date	Burj Khalifa it represents the center of dubai and the effort of hardwork to be unique	rocket	louis vitton	Yes
191	4/28/2014 4:35	Canadian	30-40	Plastic	Superficial	Fake	World Trade centre - Coz that was the first one!	Candle	Cosmopolitan Magazine	Yes
192	4/28/2014 0:41	British	Above 50	Metropolis	Unified by strict laws	Overdeveloped	Burj Alarab	Dhow Sail	Kellogs	Yes

193	4/28/2014 8:59	british		Above 50	uncontrolled	Superficial	egotistical	<p>Burj Khalifa, of course. Amazing concept, crazy design, had to be bailed out by Abu Dhabi and renamed Khalifa at the last minute. The big concern about Dubai's architecture is that the ambition and vision outweighs the means to achieve it.</p> <p>Just like the population - people are living on the never-never and aspiring to a lifestyle that they think they should have because it's the culture of the city. In reality, everyone's running like mad just to stand still.</p>	upturned leg of a cricket insect	Royal Bank of Scotland	Yes
194	4/28/2014 4:39	iraqi		30-40	burgeoning	Interesting Hybrid	flashy	Burj Khalifa for its iconic status and unique design. It's already symbolic and dwarfs Burj al arab	stalactite/stalagmite/cicle	high end from the LVNH series of designer labels	Yes
195	4/28/2014 8:04	British		Below 20	Possibility	Desiscriminating, Superficial, Diverse	Breathtaking	The Burj Khalifa, the true symbol of innovation, development and a city of dreams	Power, Strength	Coca Cola	Yes
196	4/28/2014 20:02	Indian		20-30	artificial	Interesting Hybrid, Unified by strict laws	out of context	burj khalifa	needle	Bounty	Yes
197	5/24/2014 10:55	italian		Above 50	amazing	Conservative	confuse	trade center	beauty	gilette	Yes
198	6/2/2014 20:20	French		20-30	Splendide	Tolerant and easily co-living	Beautiful	Burn khalifa	Bugatti	Louis vuitton	Yes
199	6/2/2014 21:41	English		30-40	Beautiful	Perfect	Gigantic	Burj khalifa	Porsche	Gucci	No
200	6/3/2014 20:40	England		20-30	Beautiful	Tolerant and easily co-living	Incredible	This is the largest. Burj khalifa I live beside.	My car , mercedes	Fendi	Yes
201	6/3/2014 20:48	Bengladesh		30-40	Great	Tolerant and easily co-living	Wonderful	Burj khalifa The largest building in the world	My wife	Mercedes	Yes
202	6/3/2014 21:06	England		20-30	Nice	Tolerant and easily co-living	Big	Burj alarab This is the best hotel in the world for me	My car	North face	Yes
203	6/3/2014 21:13	French		20-30	Best	Very helpful	Nice	Burj khalifa The beSt building in the world	A Rolex watch	Louis Vuitton	Yes









204	6/3/2014 21:24	French	40-50	Unique	Tolerant and easily co-living. Unified by strict laws	Incredible	Burn khalifa, so beautiful	Porsche	Dolce&Gabbana	Yes
205	6/3/2014 21:36	Usa	Below 20	Perfect	Tolerant and easily co-living	Incredible	Emirates mall, I love skiing	Lamborghini	Lamborghini	Yes
206	6/3/2014 21:40	America	30-40	Beautiful	Tolerant and easily co-living	Beautiful	Burn khalifa, unique in the world	Luxury watches	Gucci	Yes
207	6/3/2014 22:05	Qatar	20-30	Good	Tolerant and easily co-living	Beautiful	Burn alarab, I was in this hotel, it's the better	Porsche	Louis vuitton	Yes
208	6/3/2014 22:30	French	30-40	Magic	Tolerant and easily co-living	Unique	Burj Alarab Because it's beautiful	Luxe	Versace	Yes
209	6/3/2014 22:36	Arabie saoudite	30-40	Beautiful	Very nice	Gigantic	Burj khalifa This is the best tour	...	Gucci	Yes
210	6/3/2014 22:38	China	20-30	Incredible	Tolerant and easily co-living	Beautiful	Burj khalifa, unique	Luxury think	Fendi	Yes
211	6/4/2014 2:04	England	20-30	Beautiful	Tolerant and easily co-living	Wonderful	Burj khalifa	Rolls Royce	Bikkembergs	Yes
212	6/4/2014 2:15	America	30-40	Beautiful	Tolerant and easily co-living	It's crazy	Burj khalifa This is the largest in the world.	New york	Disquared	Yes
213	6/5/2014 10:11	French	Below 20	Incredible	Tolerant and easily co-living	Beautiful	Burj khalifa, only one in the world	Audi rs7	Louis vuitton	Yes
214	6/5/2014 10:14	French	20-30	Magnificent	Tolerant and easily co-living	Magic	Burj alarab, very beautiful	Rolex	Prada	Yes
215	6/5/2014 10:16	French	Below 20	Unique	Tolerant and easily co-living	Beautiful	Burj khalifa, very beautiful	Diamond	Gucci	Yes
216	6/5/2014 10:23	Iran	20-30	Good	Tolerant and easily co-living	Beautiful	Burj khalifa This is the most beautiful	...	Bentley	Yes
217	6/5/2014 10:27	Algeria	20-30	Not bad	Tolerant and easily co-living	Beautiful	Burj alarab I went with my wife is unforgettable	Mercedes	Versace	Yes
218	6/5/2014 11:57	Pakistan	40-50	Good	Tolerant and easily co-living. Discriminating	Beautiful	Burj khalifa	Mercedes	Armani	Yes
219	6/11/2014 0:39	Dutch-Iranian	20-30	Contradictory	Interesting Hybrid	cutting-edge	The tallest building. Because it's most unconventional in shape and height.	A space shuttle	Apple	Yes
220	6/26/2014 7:37	Lebanese	40-50	Pearl of the Gulf Sea rich	Tolerant and easily co-living	Shining Jewels	Burj khalifa	Highest tower of the world	Rolex	Yes
221	7/11/2014 21:33	vietnam	20-30	rich	Interesting Hybrid	building	no idea	car	twix	Yes
222	10/17/2014 2:12	Indian	20-30	Sham	Interesting Hybrid	Pathetic	Burj Khalifa	cindrella's castle, disneyland	commercial	Yes
223	5/30/2017 11:42	UAE	40-50	Progressive	Interesting Hybrid	Mix of everything	Burj Khalifa for its unique qualities	Rocket	Ferrari	Yes
224	12/6/2017 23:15	Egyptian	30-40	Fake	Unified by strict laws	Messy	Burj khalifa It represent the city policy of being the most in all aspects	Column	Gucci	Yes
225	12/6/2017 23:36	Egyptian	Above 50	Cosmopolitan	Tolerant and easily co-living. Unified by strict laws	Futuristic	Burj Dubai Cz it s the highest building	It resembles a rocket	Armani	Yes

226	12/7/2017 3:00	Egyptian	30-40	Dynamic	Tolerant and easily co-living	Diverse	Burj Khalifa as it's the tallest building in the world.	Nothing. Just a big modern building.	Tesla	Yes
227	12/9/2017 23:09	Jordanian	30-40	Safe	Superficial	Ambitious	Burj alarab	Boats sale	Rolls Royce	Yes
228	12/10/2017 6:31	Jordanian	30-40	Skyscrapers	Discriminating, Superficial	Evolving	Every era has its own icon of an architecture. In the olden days the world trade center was the most significant and recognised architecture. These days newer, taller, more modern, prettier have taken the spotlight. There are many iconic buildings at the moment, what a person remembers is usually the ones being marketed the most.	Windows to the future	DKNY	Yes

Appendix C.1

Focus Group Study: Template and Respondents' Sheets

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
			
			
			
			
		Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	
			Corporate, Communication,
			
			

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Age:

Nationality:

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

Yes

No

Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

Yes

No

Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

Yes

No

Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?

Yes

No

Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?

Yes

No

Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?

Yes

No

Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil


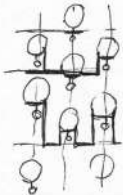
Appendix C.2

Focus Group Study: Students' Response Sheets (Pilot Study)

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination














Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khalifa		DUBAI	DUBAI
Burj Dubai		Luxury cruise/ yacht	Sensual pleasure of living by the sea like royalty
Palm Island		Fusion of land, water & organic life (plant)	More Dubai
		Shapes, geometry	Organizing people, functions, formal
		Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	Foster a community dedicated to unique asian hospitality
		Spherical projection- extent of communication	Corporate, Communication,
		Skeleton, template, organization	Simple, basic apartments & offices.
		Void-induced Movement,	Transportation, Speech Technology

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PS1-1

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Dubai Marina		Freedom	walking place
Jumeirah hotel / Burj Al Arab		Adventure	diving / beach center
Palm Jumeirah / Eastasia towers		Height and Shelter / Shade	experience a new life
	 two people talking	verbal communication / socializing	special verbal / psychology center / astrology building
	 Ariel's father's cane	Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	Cultural center / bank
	 golf club / keep on wine for economic transactions	connection / interactions	Corporate, Communication,
	 Bee house / coral	Services / purity	office block / mail house
	 Seashell	adventure to find the pearl a.k.a. reach the train.	diving center













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* Logo bricks / puzzle

o grape: 










PS1-2

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Dubai Al Arab		Strong Power vs. Weakness	Government
Burj Al Arab		Peace	Spa center Government
Atlantis Palm Islands		Middle east Desert	Resort, Beach Attraction
		power	
		Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	Hotel
		ports	Corporate, Communication,
	request header		office
		competition	multi Ethnic arrows.

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Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination








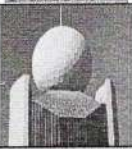




Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khalifa		Majestic posh.	business hotel
Burj Al Arab		conquering the seas. power.	resort
The Palm, Jumeira		floating at the floating } relax swaying }	resort/ residence/Disney land
	Broken into 2 houses house 	comprehensiveness	Telecommunication
	Titanic sinking	Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	business.
	Eagle.	majestic.	Corporate, Communication,
	mobile phone with antenna.	global relations.	hospital
	T & V channel for news	movement.	communication mall

Iconic ←

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Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination




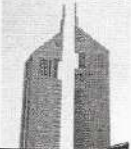






Elisabetta Foweraker

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
<i>Bay Sheikha</i>		<i>Wealth; Ready heaven.</i>	<i>Hotel.</i>
<i>Bay Al Arab</i>		<i>Desert</i>	<i>Office / Luxury shore.</i>
<i>Palm Jameirah.</i>		<i>Heat</i>	<i>Urban.</i>
	<i>Shards / Swords</i> 	<i>Power.</i>	<i>Office space center.</i>
	 <i>Citizen</i>	<i>Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,</i>	<i>Office</i>
	<i>Golf Tennis Ball</i> 	<i>Sport.</i>	<i>Corporate, Communication,</i>
	<i>pumice stone</i> 	<i>Strength Hugger.</i>	<i>Hotel.</i>
	<i>Ring, ready for flight</i>	<i>Take off</i>	<i>Transport</i>

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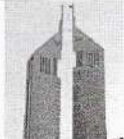



Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khalifa		Luxury, height	offices, Residential
Burj Al Arab		Sea, Going from somewhere to another.	
Palm Jumeirah Island		Life, Nature	Luxurious Residential Pkce. Big city extension
	Needle		Offices
	Pants / Japanese hands welcoming 	Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	Hotel
	Golf Ball 	Connections, connecting people	Corporate, Communication,
	Rocket / Cheese cutter	Rich, Wealth, Money	offices
	yugyo hand machine / Turtle shell	Continuation, movement	Transportation

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Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination




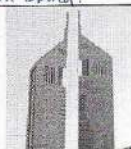





Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khalifa		Luxury	trade centre
Burj ARAB		Sea	Sailing Centre
Palm Jumeirah		desert	residential
	a gun	Power	office
	Pants	Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	Post factory
	a human	unique	Corporate, Communication,
	'needle	Power	office
	a gun/wristband in sci movies	movement/ Strong	Toy Store

most
powerful

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Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Etisalat Tower

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khalifa		power presence.	Residence luxury
Burj Al Arab		heritage, culture, sailing.	hotel
Palm Island.		wealth, roots, origin, beginnings.	tourism tour journey
	two forks.	icon. family. union.	office
	a rocket 	Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	Spa
	a golf ball	stance.	Corporate, Communication,
	a match box	An old arab grandpa	residential
	an armadillo shell.	sturdy,	mall.

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Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khalifa		Thunder strike	elevation to sky
Jumeirah Beach		waves, UAE tradition	sea sea activity
Palm Jumeirah		wind/serenity, UAE tradition (mangrove)	Park
	2 people communicating	communication	Business/offices
	something got crushed in the middle head and legs	Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	Home
most iconic 	eagle	Pride/dignity	Corporate, Communication,
	cube/rocket/ spongebob	Pores	home/offices
	rocket/boat	Motion/speed	transportation

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Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination








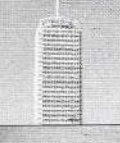

ttisalat

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khalifa		moving forward, wheel	hotel
Burj Al Arab		movement, fish	hotel
The Palm		tall-high, division, growth	amusement park
	pens/ 2 insect cartoons talking	pinnacle, sharp	office
	church / temple / beard	Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	house residential
	pearl / golf ball	sporty	Corporate, Communication,
	Eraser with pencil lead inserted in it.	stability	office building
	space ship, finger nail w/ nail polish	speed	arcade center

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Etisalat Tower






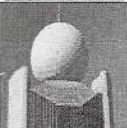


Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khalifa		Elegance Hierarchy Majestic	
Burj Al Arab		Connection Freedom	
Palm Jumeirah		Diversity	Residential
	Two faces reflect of each other	Competition	offices
	- Cane - paper clip	Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	Hotel
	- Crown - Golf ball 	Connection	Corporate, Communication,
	Needle	Solidity	office building
	Space ship		Star Station

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icon - Etisalat Building
 metaphor - Palm
 -

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khalifa			
Burj Al Arab		sea	Tourists building
palm		tradition	Resort/Hotels
			office building
		Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	Residential
	Purell/golf ball	game	Corporate, Communication,
	Cube	Boring	media building
	Bird head	sky	Transportation

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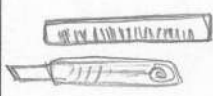








Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khalifa		Conquering altitudes	Meeting hub for conferences
Burj al Arab		Defying winds	Maritime museum
Palm Jumeirah		Oasis, Icon, Connectivity with space, Identity	Water park
	- Star wars ship - Keppi - Rock picking kit	Sharpness	Space Hub Museum
	- stick man - Military rank	Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	Aerial museum
	Robot ReDe (Roman) soldier	Stiffness	Corporate, Communication,
	Lego block Cheese shredder	Aerodynamics	Residential
	Surfing Viper	Continuity	Aquarium

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Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination














(Emirati → most powerful) (Palm → strongest)

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
		power, luxury, sharpness, standing out, unique	castle
		sailing / stand out on water	sailing hub marin office
		nature and culture identity	farm
		? business communication, Asian fighting	Business block
		Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	Hotel
		the world in one place	Corporate, Communication,
		sharp	Apartments building
		organic	Per mall

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Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Etoslat tower

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khalifa		Luxury	office and tourism
Burj Al Arab		tradition	Hotel tourism
Palm Island		Culture	Resort
	 Paper boat	Bright Future	office Building
	 Flash drive	Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	office Block
	 Golf Ball	Sport	Corporate, Communication,
	 Rocket	technology	Satellite communication place
	 Sea Shell	futuristic	transportation

By signing this document, you agree on the inclusion of your answers in academic research conducted under the regulations of the UK's Committee of Higher Education. Personal information shall remain anonymous and completely confidential.

Faisalat .
Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khalifa		power .	
Burj Al arab .	 <i>univalent means one thing .</i>	luxury .	
Balm jumara		beach (tropical).	urban place .
	<i>house split in half</i> 	connection .	
	<i>multivalent have multiple meanings .</i>	Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	shopping area .
	A golf ball .	help / service	Corporate, Communication,
	boat . from bird's view .		office building
	bird .	movement .	station .





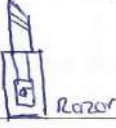





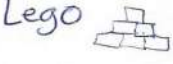

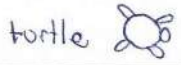
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Appendix C.3

Focus Group Study: Students' Response Sheets (Official Study)

Handwritten signature

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Gargash Building		Speed	Showroom
Damascus Penguins		unidentical twins	offices
Burg Khalifa		Growth	hospitality
		CUTTING THROUGH THE SKY	Business Tower
		Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	residence
		Sending something from one place to another	Corporate, Communication,
		old connecting to the world	Embassy, Government
		Slow momentum	transportation

By signing this document, you agree on the inclusion of your answers in academic research conducted under the regulations of the UK's Committee of Higher Education. Personal information shall remain anonymous and completely confidential.

G1-1

Age: 21

Nationality: LEBANESE

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
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Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
N/A Gargash.		Power, Futuristic.	Iconic.
Borj Al Arab.		Sailing, Tradition.	N/A
Palm Jumeira.		Culture, growth.	Residential.
		Sharp, edge cutting, couple.	Res. + Commercial.
		Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	N/A. maybe commercial
	 ice cream scoop	Connection, Service Satellite.	Corporate, Communication,
		Old.	Offices. ?
		Futuristic, Speed.	Metro.

By signing this document, you agree on the inclusion of your answers in academic research conducted under the regulations of the UK's Committee of Higher Education. Personal information shall remain anonymous and completely confidential.

Age: 21

Nationality: Libyan.

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
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Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khalifa		Luxury	Hotel/hospitality
Burj al Arab		symbol of Dubai	7* hotel
palm jumeirah		creating space	Residential
	 sharks	Global Commercial/business	Offices
	 Giant Magnet	Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	hot
	 golf ball robot body	sports	Corporate, Communication,
	 upside down popsicle ice cream	monotomous	offices
	 Ring	futurestic	transportation

By signing this document, you agree on the inclusion of your answers in academic research conducted under the regulations of the UK's Committee of Higher Education. Personal information shall remain anonymous and completely confidential.

G1-3

G1-3

Age:

Nationality:

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

Yes	No
-----	----

Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

Yes	No
-----	----

Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

Yes	No
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Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?

Yes	No
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Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?










Yes	No
-----	----

Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?

Yes	No
-----	----


Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khalifa		Luxury,	Icon
Burj Al Arab		Old Dubai, Heritage	Contradicting function should welcome all people.
Palm Jumeirah		Creativity, Icon (Palm tree)	Residential
	Woman shorter Man taller	Business	Offices
	 Flash Drive	Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	Offices
	Golf Ball	International	Corporate, Communication,
	LEGO	Dubai Growth.	Offices
	Cockroach	Alive	Transportation

By signing this document, you agree on the inclusion of your answers in academic research conducted under the regulations of the UK's Committee of Higher Education. Personal information shall remain anonymous and completely confidential.

Age: 18
Nationality: Syrian

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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per

Thank you for your participation,
 Jasmine Shahin, Mphil

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khalifah		comfortable	to reach sky
Burj Al arab		symbol of Dubai for VIP People	
Jw marriot hotel in Sheikh Zayed road		for shadow → hotel and date → restaurant	to mirror of Dubai
	two 2 person are dancing 	Business center	Earning money meeting conference
	Paper clips 	Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	hotel
	Robot head hands body 	Technology Center	Corporate, Communication,
	a Juice with straw 	Security and Very Secret	offices
	Sandwich bread	movement	transportation

By signing this document, you agree on the inclusion of your answers in academic research conducted under the regulations of the UK's Committee of Higher Education. Personal information shall remain anonymous and completely confidential.



Age: ~~20~~ 25

Nationality: Iranian

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
---	-----------------------------

Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil



Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khalifa		Elegance Luxury	hotel
Burj Al Arab		Heritage	Icon
The Palm		Creativity	residential
	two pens in holders	business	business offices
	paper clips	Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	hotel
	golf ball	etisalat (communications)	Corporate, Communication,
	bee hive	history	residential
	space ship	modernism	gallery

By signing this document, you agree on the inclusion of your answers in academic research conducted under the regulations of the UK's Committee of Higher Education. Personal information shall remain anonymous and completely confidential.

Age: 20

Nationality: Jordanian

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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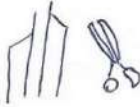

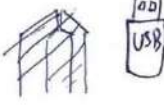






Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khalifa		Luxury confidence	Corporate residential Icon
Burj Al Arab		Ancestry beauty	Hotel exclusive
The Palm Jumeirah		Tradition Icon	residential
		Duality luxury	Hotels, Corporate
		Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	Hotel
	egg on a nest 	communication communication international technology	Corporate, Communication,
	 Pen	concentrated concentrated plain	corporate corporate offices
	shell 	movement modernism	transportation

By signing this document, you agree on the inclusion of your answers in academic research conducted under the regulations of the UK's Committee of Higher Education. Personal information shall remain anonymous and completely confidential.

Age: 23

Nationality: Saudi

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
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Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
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Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No
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Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?

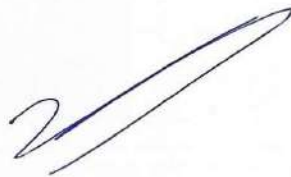
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Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
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Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
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Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khalifa		class	Hotel
Burj Al Arab		Peace	Icon
Atlantis		Creativity	Hotel
	Insect with tentacles	Business	Companies
	Flash drive	Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	Hotel
	Golf ball	Sports	Corporate, Communication,
	Needle	boring	Hospital
	Spaceship	technology	theatre

By signing this document, you agree on the inclusion of your answers in academic research conducted under the regulations of the UK's Committee of Higher Education. Personal information shall remain anonymous and completely confidential.

Age: 18

Nationality: Egyptian

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
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Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
BURJ Khalifa		Chic	Eye catching
BURJ Al Arab		Tradition (sailing)	Hotel
The palm		Tradition Money	Residential Residential
	water meter	symmetry	Corporate offices
	A	Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	offices
	Lego persona	Communication	Corporate, Communication,
	Crown on stand	History	Air control tower.
	Turtle	Movement	Transportation

By signing this document, you agree on the inclusion of your answers in academic research conducted under the regulations of the UK's Committee of Higher Education. Personal information shall remain anonymous and completely confidential.



Age: 20
Nationality: Lebanese.

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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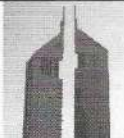


Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
---	-----------------------------

Thank you for your participation,
 Jasmine Shahin, Mphil



Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
		<u>luxury</u> <u>comfort</u>	<u>attract</u> <u>attention</u>
		<u>The sea</u> <u>hard work</u>	<u>hard</u> <u>welcoming</u> <u>work</u> <u>to Dubai</u>
<u>Palm Jumeira</u>		<u>money</u>	
	 <u>two people fighting</u>		
	<u>transformers</u>	Asian Hospitality, Welcoming	
	<u>pincushion</u>	<u>international</u>	Corporate, Communication,
	<u>upside-down</u> <u>popside</u>	<u>Something</u> <u>trying to be</u> <u>interesting</u>	<u>Prices</u>
	<u>Sixty</u> <u>tunnels</u> <u>tunnel</u>	<u>Future</u>	<u>transportation</u>

By signing this document, you agree on the inclusion of your answers in academic research conducted under the regulations of the UK's Committee of Higher Education. Personal information shall remain anonymous and completely confidential.



Age: 18

Nationality: Egyptian

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
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Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?


<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
---	-----------------------------

Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?





<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination*Zaid*

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
—		—	—
Burj Al Arab		Emirati Culture	Hotel
The palm		Technology	Housing community.
	Compass (drawing circles).	Unity.	Business.
	Pyramid.	Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	Hotel
	Golf ball	Communication	Corporate, Communication,
	Ice cream	Simplicity	Office
	Graduation Hat.	Fast	Mall

By signing this document, you agree on the inclusion of your answers in academic research conducted under the regulations of the UK's Committee of Higher Education. Personal information shall remain anonymous and completely confidential.

Age: 19

Nationality: Bahraini



Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
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Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
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Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No
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Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
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Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?









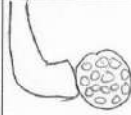



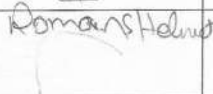
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Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
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Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, M phil

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khalifa's floor plan		Mercedes logo and Burj Khalifa Both reflect luxury	Icon that stands for the city as the tallest building in the world
Burj Al Arab		Dubai's culture	Hotel plus a business point
Plan Jumeirah Island		Calmness	functional space and you can easily circulate in the space
		It's an Icon that stand for Dubai as a spot where people start talking about	Business Spot and center
		Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	Hotel
		Communication	Corporate, Communication,
		Chocolate Sweet Savoryness is	Governmental place and service
		Roman helmet Icon	Metro station

By signing this document, you agree on the inclusion of your answers in academic research conducted under the regulations of the UK's Committee of Higher Education. Personal information shall remain anonymous and completely confidential.




Age: 20

Nationality: Egyptian

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

Yes	No
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Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

Yes	No
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Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

Yes	No
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Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?

Yes	No
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Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?










Yes	No
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Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?

Yes	No
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Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
—		—	—
Burj Al Arab		Arab Culture, pearl diving, Dubai	Hotel
The Palm		desert land, Dubai, nature, Beverly Hills-ish	secluded housing project
	 fountain Pen	Business-like	Business, office building
	Gate	Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	office building
	robot, golf ball	futuristic, technology, communication	Corporate, Communication,
	block, cheese shredder	Simple, plain, compressed	residential
	sand dunes, technological armor	futuristic, technological, transportation	transportation, communication, airport

By signing this document, you agree on the inclusion of your answers in academic research conducted under the regulations of the UK's Committee of Higher Education. Personal information shall remain anonymous and completely confidential.



Age: 19

Nationality: Canadian

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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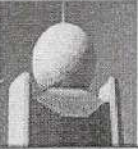


Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, M phil

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khalifa		Dubai Dubai Luxury Icon	Entertainment
Burj Al Arab		Dubai	- Hotel - monument
The Palm Jumeira		Dubai	maze
	ink pen ink pen	knowledge	offices
	<u>crown</u> <u>sunburst</u>	Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	hotel
	golf ball	fast-speed	Corporate, Communication,
	icecream popside stick	Look at me I'm a boring building.	office building
	- Shark	- futuristic - fast speed	metro- station

By signing this document, you agree on the inclusion of your answers in academic research conducted under the regulations of the UK's Committee of Higher Education. Personal information shall remain anonymous and completely confidential.

Age: 20

Nationality: American

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

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Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?

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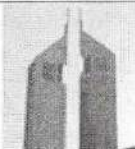




Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, M phil

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khalifa		tallest building, luxurious, Dubai	is office building
Burj Al Arab		heritage man-made island, Dubai	lighthouse.
The palm		man made islands oasis	housing community
	fountain pen	business	business towers
	gate	Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	office building
	golf ball raffaelo, -desert	technology	Corporate, Communication,
	block	every every country has a world trade trade center, and this looks like every other world trade center	office.
	armor	futuristic fast strong	transportation

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Age: 18

Nationality: American

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

Yes	No
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Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

Yes	No
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Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

Yes	No
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Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?

Yes	No
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Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?

Yes	No
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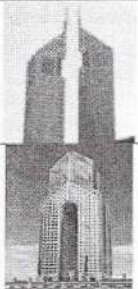




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Yes	No
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Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Ferrari world		Fast	Research center
Burj - Al - Arab		Water Heritage	hotel
The Palm Jumeirah		Dubai	island
	compass	Business	Business building
		Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	hotel
	Robot	Science	Corporate, Communication,
	box	simple	residential building
	amou	futuristic	airport

By signing this document, you agree on the inclusion of your answers in academic research conducted under the regulations of the UK's Committee of Higher Education. Personal information shall remain anonymous and completely confidential.

Age: 19

Nationality: Indian

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

Yes	No
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Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

Yes	No
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Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

Yes	No
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Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?

Yes	No
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Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?

Yes	No
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Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?

Yes	No
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Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khalifa		Balanced, equality.	touristic attraction
Burj Al Arab		ability to build relevance, tradition.	touristic attraction
Palm Jumeirah		power-ability to make a man-made island of God's creation	housing, touristic attraction
		walky talkys, phones. to show connections, communications	puts many functions in 1; offices, retail, etc. so people feel connected with everything
		temple Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	commercial, for everyone - spiritual sense because of the central long piece
		Eagle egg laying on a nest. culture, tradition, history, roots.	Corporate, Communication,
		Kittkat. not nice as an image but - intriguing to see to explore.	world trade center - public use - everyone can come in.
		spaceship - carries people massive	transports people

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Age: 21

Nationality: Canadian

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
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Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
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Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No
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Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?

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Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
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Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
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Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
			
Burj Al Arab		sail of a boat in the water as if it's a boat	Hotel
Palm Jumeirah		connects to traditions the beginnings of the region as dates was the main food ages ago in Dubai	Residential area / Resorts
	 Robots	Reminds me of 2 Robots standing in front of each other	commercial offices
	 Zwifol	Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	Commercial
		Golf ball golf instruction as it's a popular sport in Dubai	Corporate, Communication,
		Trading of the city as it's one of the oldest buildings in Dubai	World Trade Centre
	 Sunglasses as waves can transport any floating element on the water		Metro Station

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Age: 19

Nationality: Egyptian

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

Yes ✓	No
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Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

Yes ✓	No
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Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

Yes	No ✓
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Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?

Yes ✓	No
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Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?

Yes ✓	No
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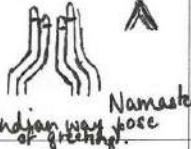



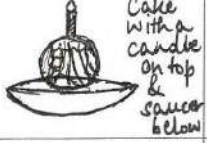

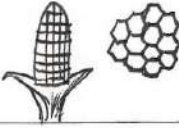

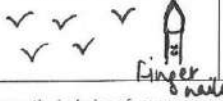
Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?

Yes ✓	No
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JS

Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Raffles / Wafi Mall.		Balance b/w heritage & modernism.	Touristic attraction.
Jumeirah Beach Hotel.		Water-related activities such as 'pearl diving'.	To show oneness with nature. (Residential).
Palm Jumeirah		Unity in diversity	A better aerial view for the city works well (Mixed Use).
	 (Indian way pose of greeting). Namaste	Greet/welcome people into the city.	Commercial
	 Rocket	Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	Technological place.
	 Cake with a candle on top & saucer below	Fullness / Sense of completion, Satisfaction.	Corporate, Communication,
		Boldness, strength, unity	Commercial.
	 Finger & nails	Freedom, Ease	Touristic attraction.

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Signature

Age: 19

Nationality: Indian

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

Yes	No
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Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

Yes	No
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Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

Yes	No
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Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?

Yes	No
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Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?

Yes	No
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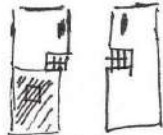







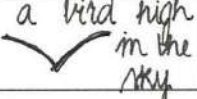
Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?

Yes	No
-----	----

Jasmine

Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khalifa		Dubai embraces diversity	looks like a welcoming building
Burj Al Arab		Escaping from the real world	like commercial building
The Palm Jumeira		Tradition	looks like a residential area
		conversation, communication	commercial building commercial building
		Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	A public space / an office
		accomplishment	Corporate, Communication,
		refreshment / open-mindedness	commercial building
		efficiency	communication

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Age: 20

Nationality: Belgium

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
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Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
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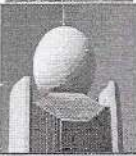





Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
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Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil



Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khalifa		soaring heights	Tower, residential z
Jumeirah Creek Hotel Beach		sail	residential , hotel
the palm jumeirah		branching out into new horizons, necessity (food)	resort, functions well
		two men fighting	commercial building
		Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	gateway
		welcoming man.	Corporate, Communication,
		nothing	residential, corporate
		encompasses a tube	metro station

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Age: 19

Nationality: Indian

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

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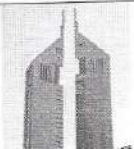






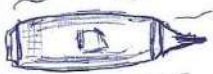

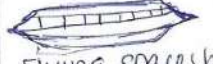
Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
---	-----------------------------

Maryam

Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khal Khalifa		Sophistication uniqueness	Hotel and residence
Burj Al Arab		Sea-like atmosphere. Tradition of Old Dubai	Hotel
Palm Jumeirah		Tradition, expansion trade.	Resorts, residency.
		Communication Movement	Business offices.
		Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	Cooperate.
		World wide Activity	Corporate, Communication,
	 Top view of ship	Trade shipping ships, travel	Communication Cooperation
	 Flying spaceship	Transportation movement futuristic	Transport Community

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Age: 19

Nationality: Jordanian

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

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Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?

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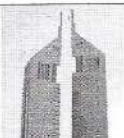









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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khalifa		It shows a form of power and strength. The material used also connects to the sense of strength.	Tourist Attraction
Burj Al Arab		It shows the form of a sailboat that it is a boat sailing across Dubai.	Tourist Attraction
Palm Jumeirah		It responds to the tradition as the Palm tree is an important part of the Arab culture.	It is a residential & commercial project. The form of the island matches the idea as it is a beach island the form allows ^{allows} visitors to come in.
	 Two people facing each other	It shows ^{shows} unity.	It looks like an office building.
	 Entrance of a door	Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	Commercial Everyone can enter / pass through
	 Eagle with the head covered	It corresponds to the tradition as the the eagle/falcon as it's a national bird. And since it's the ^{the} bird ^{bird} communication ^{communication} .	Corporate, Communication, from the falcon was used as a mean of messenger
	 Speakers	As it is a business and exhibition center the speakers show a sign of communication.	corporate
	 Wonder woman bangles	It shows power, and strengthens it ^{it} transports people.	commercial

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Age: 20

Nationality: Indian

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

Yes	No
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Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

Yes	No
-----	----

Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

Yes	No
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Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?

Yes	No
-----	----

Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?

Yes	No
-----	----

Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?

Yes	No
-----	----

LC

Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil

G

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
• Burj Khalifa Top View		• Tallest building → idea of 'capable to do anything possible'	- tourist attraction
• Burj Al-Arab		• Sailing along Dubai - traditions of how they started	• VIP space, it stands out.
• Palm Jumeirah		• Nature, the dates were a sort of survival for the food culture.	• resorts • an idea similar to maldives island
		• Unity - standing strong together	commercial residence.
		Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	Retreat, hotel, spiritual
		- looking out for people - beginning of szr	Corporate, Communication,
		- All the information stored in a piece	- communication central.
		- protection	- transport

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Age: 21 - 09/01/1996

Nationality: Jordanian

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
---	-----------------------------



Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Ferrari; world - from the top		- power - Futuristic	- speed - yes, amusement park - touristic.
Iris - business bay		- sailing.	- it does not look like the function. - looks like a hotel.
- Palm Jumeirah		- tradition.	- it doesn't look like it function
		- communication - corporate	- yes, it does look like a hotel & a business tower.
		Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	yeah, it does look like a hotel.
		Queen's like guards	Corporate, Communication, yeah
		- old - skeleton - communication	yeah it looks like an important space.
		Aliens Head	it does speak of the function, it shows movement.

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Age: 20

Nationality: Egyptian

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

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Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?

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Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?




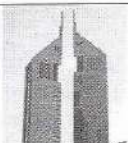









<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Basant Kherwal

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khalifa		to strength fantastic. power	No,
Burj Al Arab		sailing boat	Yes
Palm Jumeirah		tradition. roots Growth	Yes
		Corporate. competition	Yes Yes
		Gates. Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	Yes
			Corporate, Communication,
		Communication building-	Yes
		fantastic speed movement	Yes

By signing this document, you agree on the inclusion of your answers in academic research conducted under the regulations of the UK's Committee of Higher Education. Personal information shall remain anonymous and completely confidential.

Most of the building in Dubai look-like they have the same function, they look the same. Do not portray their functionality

Age: 20

Nationality: Egyptian

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

Yes	No
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Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

Yes	No
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Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

Yes	No
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Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?

Yes	No
-----	----

Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?

Yes	No
-----	----

Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?




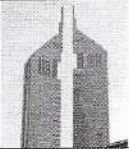
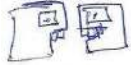



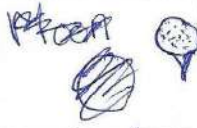

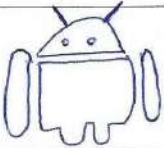

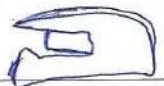
Yes	No
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Basim Hamid

Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil

94.

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Mercedes garage Mercedes Ferrari world		- Future - Fun - elegant/class/wealth	- movement - transportation
Jais business bay		- half moon	- Business offices
palm jumeirah		palm tree	- tradition - growth
		married couple	- yes - Hotel/business tower
		Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	yes, Hotel
		Moon	yes Corporate, Communication,
		ugly, old professional	yes, official use
		movement, speed	yes, metro

By signing this document, you agree on the inclusion of your answers in academic research conducted under the regulations of the UK's Committee of Higher Education. Personal information shall remain anonymous and completely confidential.

Age: 20

Nationality: Egyptian

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

Yes	No
-----	----

Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

Yes	No
-----	----

Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

Yes	No
-----	----

Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?

Yes	No
-----	----

Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?

Yes	No
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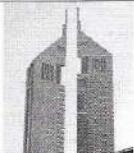







Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?

Yes	No
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Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khalifa		Sign of power	Touristic Attraction
Burj Al Arab		Mix of luxury and tradition	Hotel
Palm Jumeirah		Respect of nature.	Residential
		top Serious, sharp communication	Business tower
		Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	Hotel
	Golf ball 	Connection	Corporate, Communication,
	Empire State Building, Grader	Old	Official use
	Cocon.	Futuristic, Speed	Metro Station

By signing this document, you agree on the inclusion of your answers in academic research conducted under the regulations of the UK's Committee of Higher Education. Personal information shall remain anonymous and completely confidential.

G4-4



Age: 20

Nationality: Egyptian

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

Yes ✓	No
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Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

Yes ✓	No XXXX
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Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

Yes	No ✓
-----	------

Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?

Yes ✓	No
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Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?

Yes ✓	No
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Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?







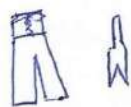




Yes ✓	No
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Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil



Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

SP

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Abu Dhabi Ferrari World		Tent	Yes
Burj Al Arab		Sailing	No, Casino
Palm		Tradition Symbolize women	Yes
		Corporate	Yes
		Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	No, Commercial buildings
	 Telemedia	Global	Corporate, Communication,
	Sudoku	old	No, Residential
	cocoon cicada	Futuristic Teleporting	Yes

By signing this document, you agree on the inclusion of your answers in academic research conducted under the regulations of the UK's Committee of Higher Education. Personal information shall remain anonymous and completely confidential.

Age: 22

Nationality: Chinese

41

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Gargash Ferrari World		power, futuristic	yes, it looks like its function
Burj Al Arab		Tradition	yes
The palm Jumeirah Burj Khalifa		Tradition	yes
		Corporate	yes
		Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	No. Corporate
	- Modern Mosque - Gulf Ball	Connection	Corporate, Communication,
	- Cheese - Mine Game	- old	No - Looks like an old hotel
	- Spaceship - Turtle	- Futuristic - Teleporting - speed	yes

By signing this document, you agree on the inclusion of your answers in academic research conducted under the regulations of the UK's Committee of Higher Education. Personal information shall remain anonymous and completely confidential.



Age:

Nationality:

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
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Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
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Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No
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Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
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Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
--------------------------------------	--------------------------

Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
--------------------------------------	--------------------------

Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khalifa		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Racing - Reaching the top - 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I think people doesn't look like its function (as hotel). - tourism purpose
Burj Al Arab		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sailing - Flag 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - it looks like its function and iconic hotel
Palm		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - tradition - Growth - richness - connection - connects building together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - yes
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Competition - Sharpness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - yes
		Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - yes
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Connection - Development 	Corporate, Communication, yes
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - old - boring 	No, it looks like residential or communication building
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - speed - movement 	yes

By signing this document, you agree on the inclusion of your answers in academic research conducted under the regulations of the UK's Committee of Higher Education. Personal information shall remain anonymous and completely confidential.

Age: 22

Nationality: Libyan

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
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Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?














<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
---	-----------------------------



Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

ambitions.
bad ideas plans!

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khalifa Downtown Dubai		great things a ray of light. alif (letter) number 4.	Don't look like its function. looks like a statue/ obelisque.
Burj Al Arab		needle, piercing the sky. Out in the sea Relaxation Breeze, Dubai, luxury	hotel
Palm Jumeirah Palm Jafar Ali (Burj Khalifa?)		greenhouse oasis fertility home life	Island residential
	(man's suit) 	plain, don't notice them communication. "another one of glass skyscrapers"	offices
	rocket. 	Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	hotel
	golf ball/orange 	fun games old Dubai	golf club? Corporate, Communication,
	robot 	Empire state building looks American. and Soviet at the same time	Corporate/ office? (I like it, although it looks plain).
	a date 	Zaha Hadid speed sport car	metro

By signing this document, you agree on the inclusion of your answers in academic research conducted under the regulations of the UK's Committee of Higher Education. Personal information shall remain anonymous and completely confidential.

- Reminds of
Khrushchev buildings
in Russia

Handwritten signature

Age: 20

Nationality: Russian

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
--------------------------------------	--------------------------

Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
--------------------------------------	--------------------------

Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No
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Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
--------------------------------------	--------------------------

Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
--------------------------------------	--------------------------

Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
--------------------------------------	--------------------------



Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khalifa / Gargash / Jumeirah World		Reaching towards something (goal)	Burj K: No, looks like a structure. It seems a little closed off (not welcoming)
Burj Al Arab		Sailing Away Isolation	No, looks like a transportation (boat) specialized space.
Palm Jumeirah		Tradition Growth Woman (fertility)	Looks like driving out to the sea Looks like a normal island
		Crisp Strong Competition Communication Business	Clearly states there are two different functions that could be anything.
	"Mal 2at"	Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	Yes, it looks like a hotel. Yes, it looks like a hotel.
		Unusual Playful Controversial Controversy Mix + Match	Corporate, Communication, Looks more playful/important
	Lego	Perforated Stacked up	
	TURTLE + COCOON	Futuristic-teleport Speed Closed / Safe	yes

By signing this document, you agree on the inclusion of your answers in academic research conducted under the regulations of the UK's Committee of Higher Education. Personal information shall remain anonymous and completely confidential.



Age: 20

Nationality: Lebanon

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
--------------------------------------	--------------------------

Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
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Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No
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Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
--------------------------------------	--------------------------

Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?














<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
--------------------------------------	--------------------------

Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
--------------------------------------	--------------------------

Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Gargash		Luxury, class-	Gallery, showroom
Damack Penguins.		standing out, different.	offices/ residential.
Burj khalifa		Tradition/ Culture	Hotel/ art gallery/ fancy
	 Gun	Cooperate, Power.	Communication, for higher, class business oriented.
	 Clips	Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	Hotel/ meeting rooms.
	 Golf Ball	connection	Corporate, Communication,
	 Leggo	connection, telecom	offices.
	 ring ancient	I'm here!!!	Transportation.

By signing this document, you agree on the inclusion of your answers in academic research conducted under the regulations of the UK's Committee of Higher Education. Personal information shall remain anonymous and completely confidential.

Age: 20

Nationality: Palestinian

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

Yes	No
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Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

Yes	No
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Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

Yes	No
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Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?

Yes	No
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Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?

Yes	No
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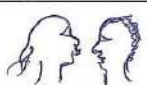

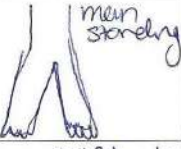




Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?

Yes	No
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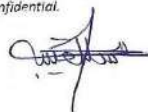


Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
 Burj Khalifa		the center point The center point	Icon, eye catching.
 Burj al Arab		Landmark	Hospitality, eye catching.
The palm island		Isolation, safety, home, money.	Hospitality, icon
		Hospitality, money.	Corporate, Hospitality
	 men standing	Asian Hospitality, Welcoming, robot.	Hospitality, money.
	 golfball.	Just a 'building'	Corporate, Communication,
	Birds cage, rib cage.	the cage the cage History.	Finance, money.
	Stingray.	movement, swimming.	transportation

By signing this document, you agree on the inclusion of your answers in academic research conducted under the regulations of the UK's Committee of Higher Education. Personal information shall remain anonymous and completely confidential.



Age: 20

Nationality: Emirati

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

Yes	No
-----	----

Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

Yes	No
-----	----

Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

Yes	No
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Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?

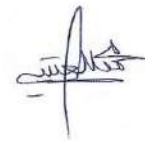
Yes	No
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Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?

Yes	No
-----	----










Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?

Yes	No
-----	----



Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
 Ferrari world		Luxury speed	Airport interior.
Burj Al - Arab		Heratige and pearl diving	luxury luxury Hotel
Jumeirah Palm		Life in Oasis.	excluded housing project
	pen	High class business and money.	Commercial
	Lego	Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	Hotel
	Pendulum Golf ball	Technology	Corporate, Communication,
	Block Block	Overcrowding	Residential
	Armour	The Future	Airport Terminal

By signing this document, you agree on the inclusion of your answers in academic research conducted under the regulations of the UK's Committee of Higher Education. Personal information shall remain anonymous and completely confidential.



G5-4

Age:

Nationality:

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

Yes	No
-----	----

Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

Yes	No
-----	----

Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

Yes	No
-----	----

Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?

Yes	No
-----	----

Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?




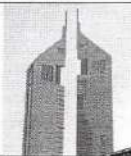





Yes	No
-----	----

Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?

Yes	No
-----	----

Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, M phil

Dubai, Iconology and Social Imagination

Building	Graphic Icon	Metaphor	Function
Burj Khalifa Gorgash building		greatness Reaching for Reaching for Sleek	unapproachable
Burj Al Arab		Sailing	Luxury
Palm Jumeirah			residential
	 Knife	Communication Sharp Ecology	Business
	Scissors "hello" - hands	Asian Hospitality, Welcoming,	hospitality
	Guard / Robot Golf ball	Heavy	Corporate, Communication,
	Lego Grater	old	Communication
	Turtle	modern, speed	Helio Station

By signing this document, you agree on the inclusion of your answers in academic research conducted under the regulations of the UK's Committee of Higher Education. Personal information shall remain anonymous and completely confidential.



Age: 20

Nationality: Egyptian

Were you fully informed about the purpose and process of the study?

Yes	No
-----	----

Did you participate in this study voluntarily?

Yes	No
-----	----

Were you promised any remuneration or reward for your participation?

Yes	No
-----	----

Were you free to end your participation at any point during the course of the focus group study?

Yes	No
-----	----

Were your opinions voiced without interference from the study administrator?

Yes	No
-----	----

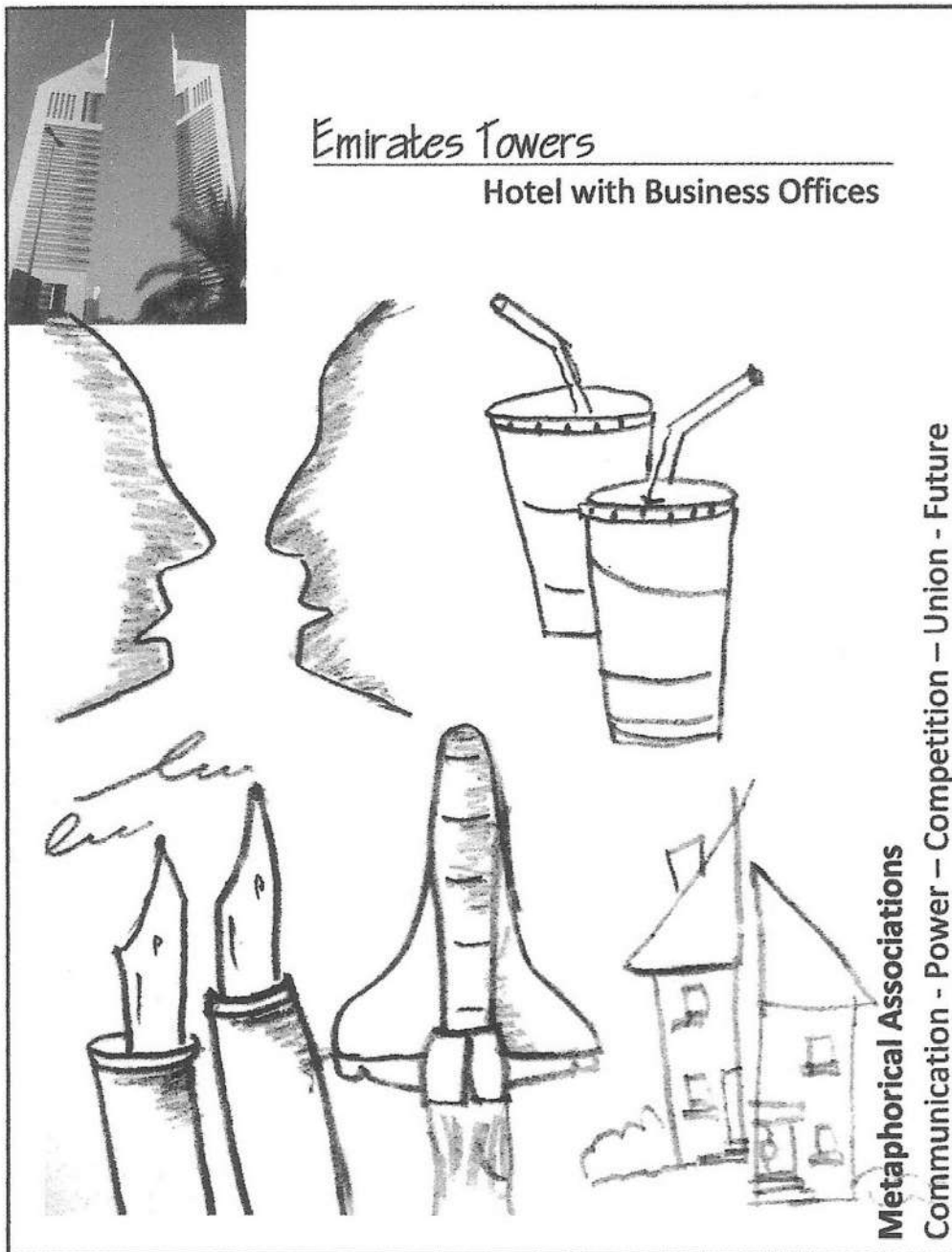
Do you give your permission to include and publish your answers as part of an academic research thesis or book?

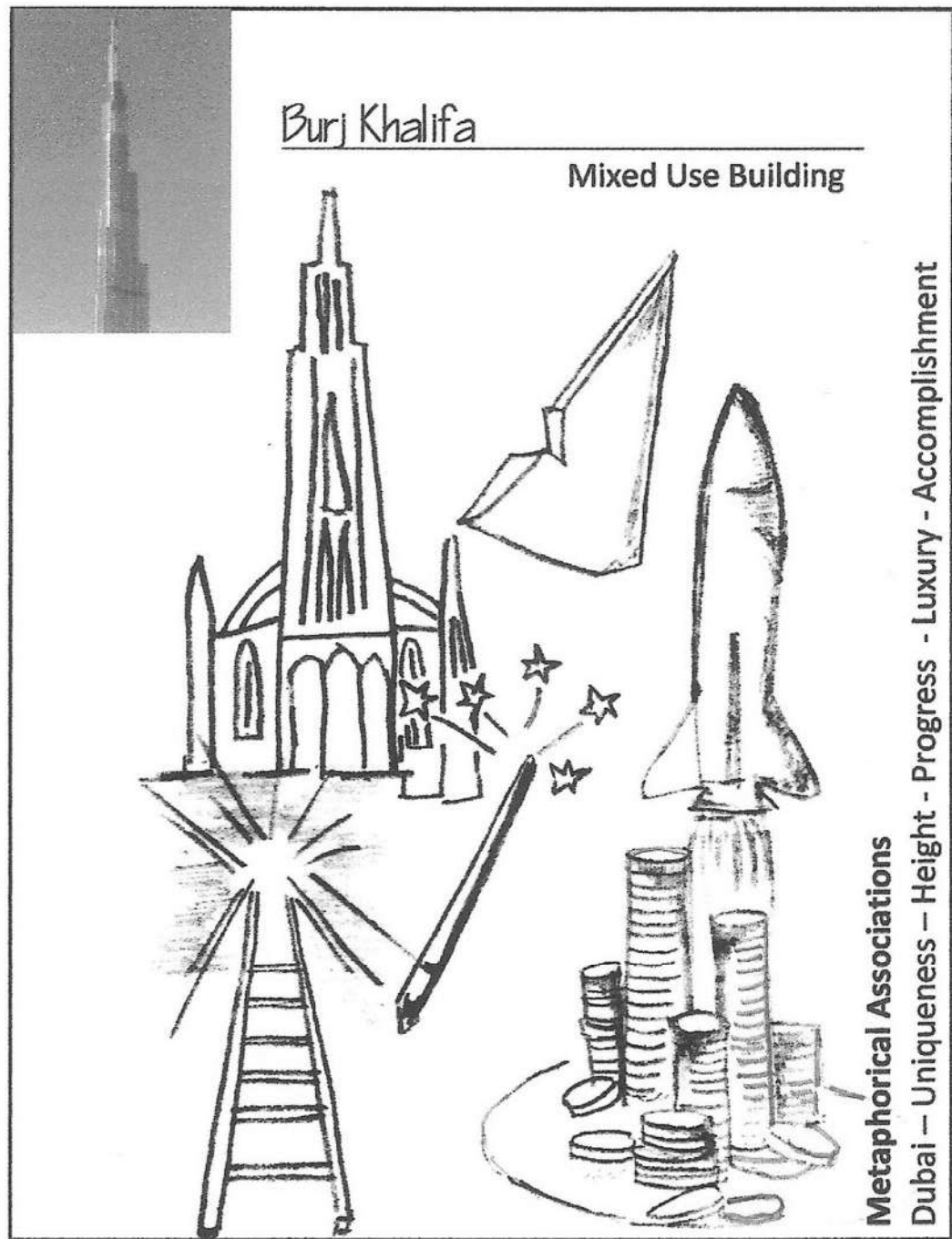
Yes	No
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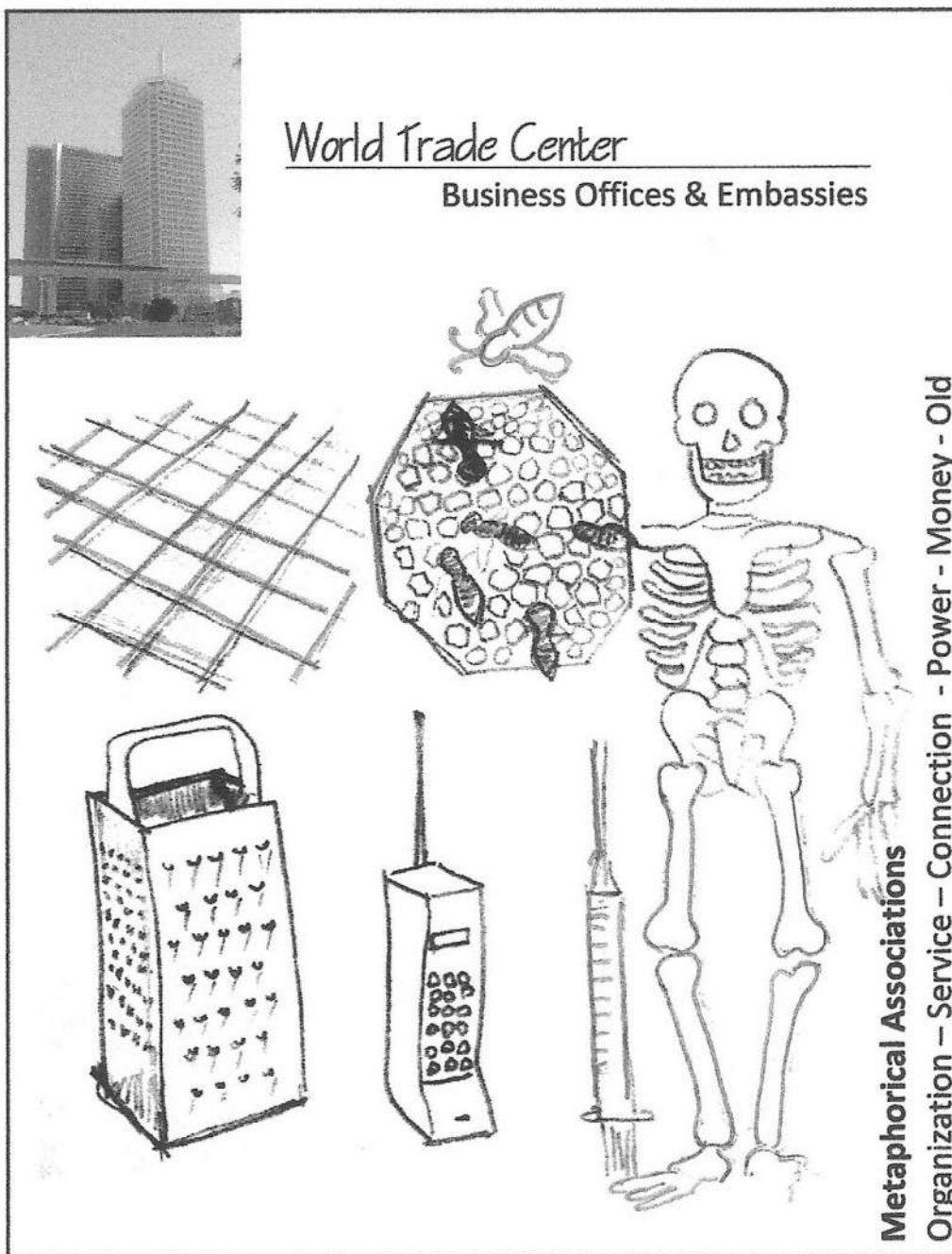
Thank you for your participation,
Jasmine Shahin, Mphil

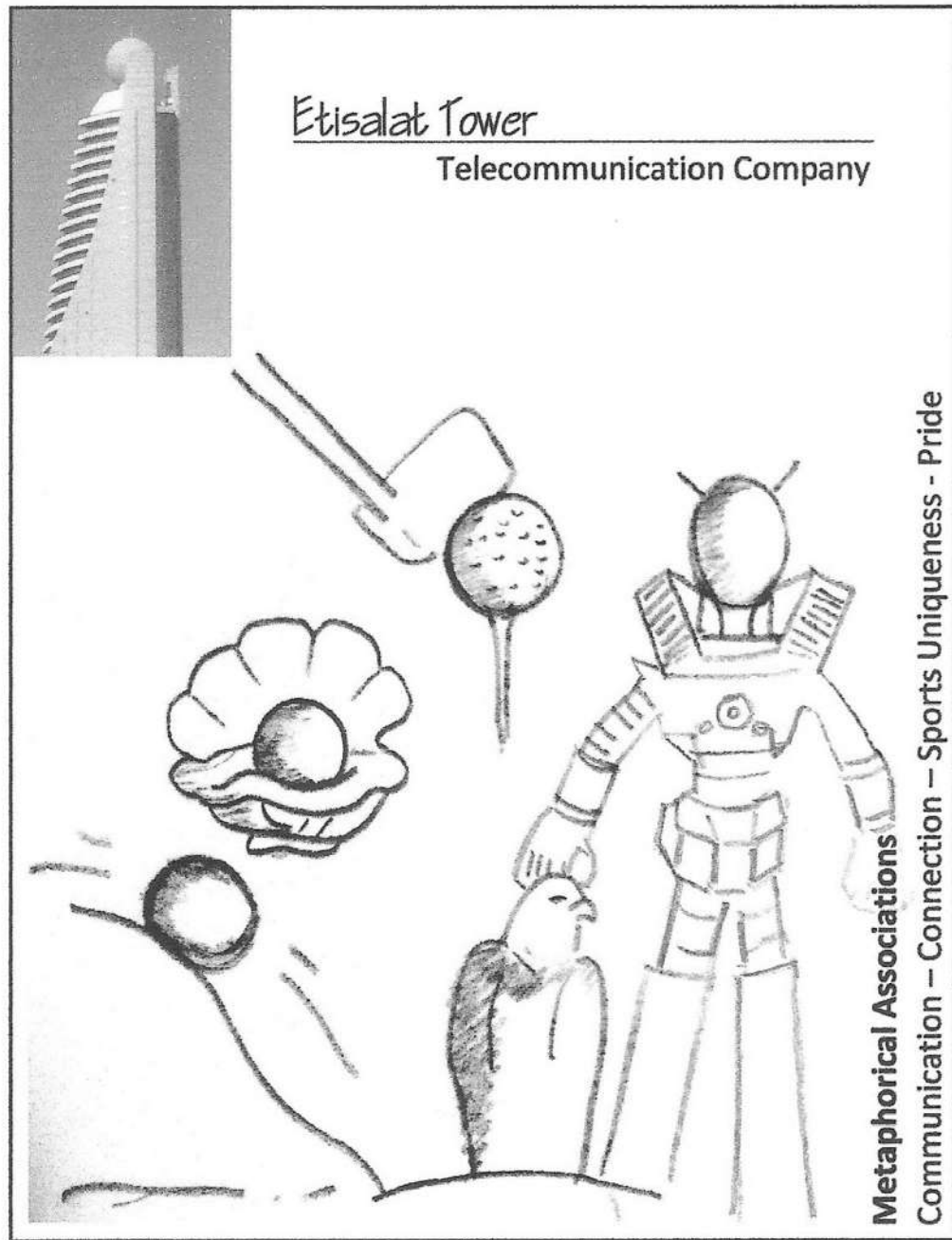
Appendix C.4

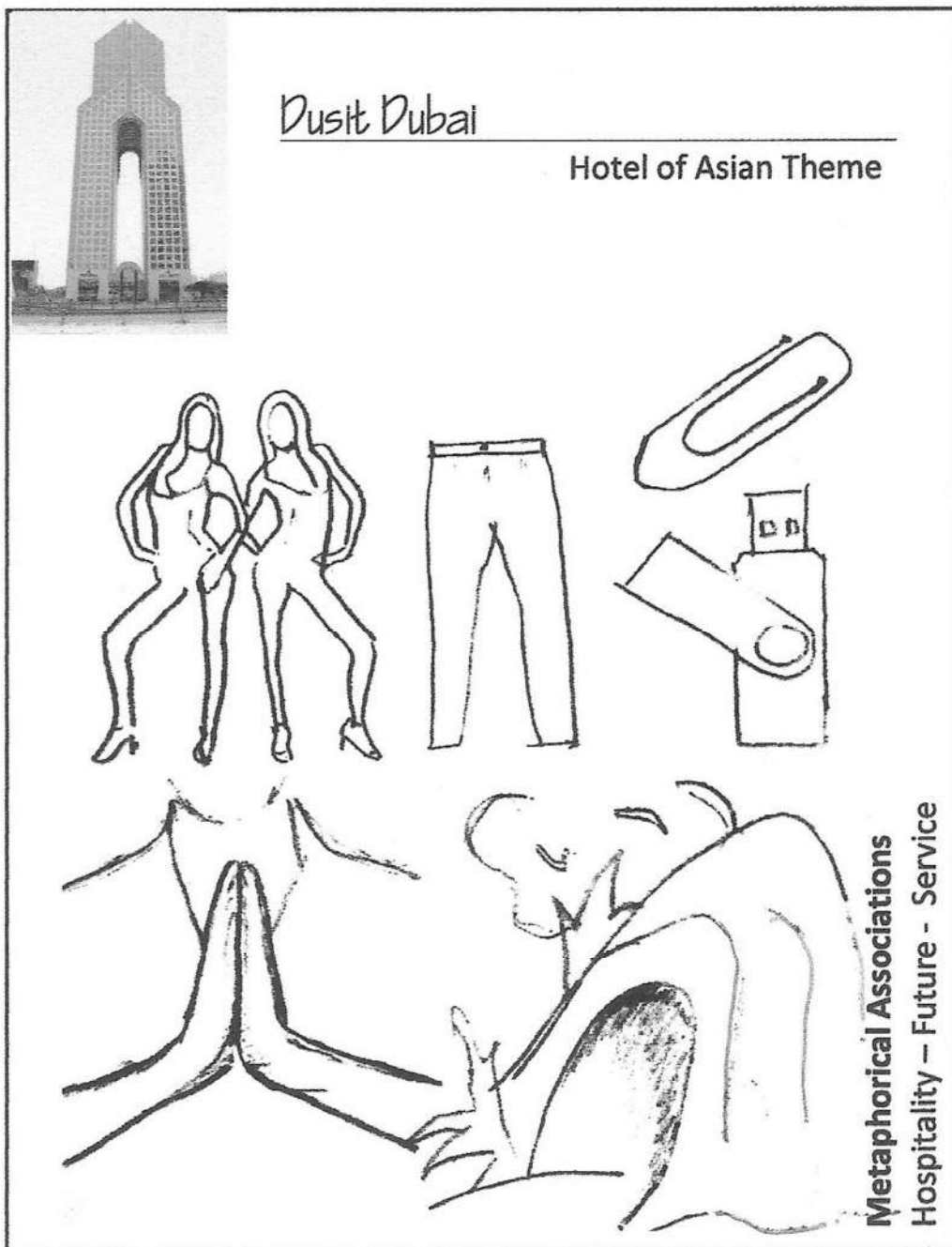
Focus Group Study: Graphic Analysis







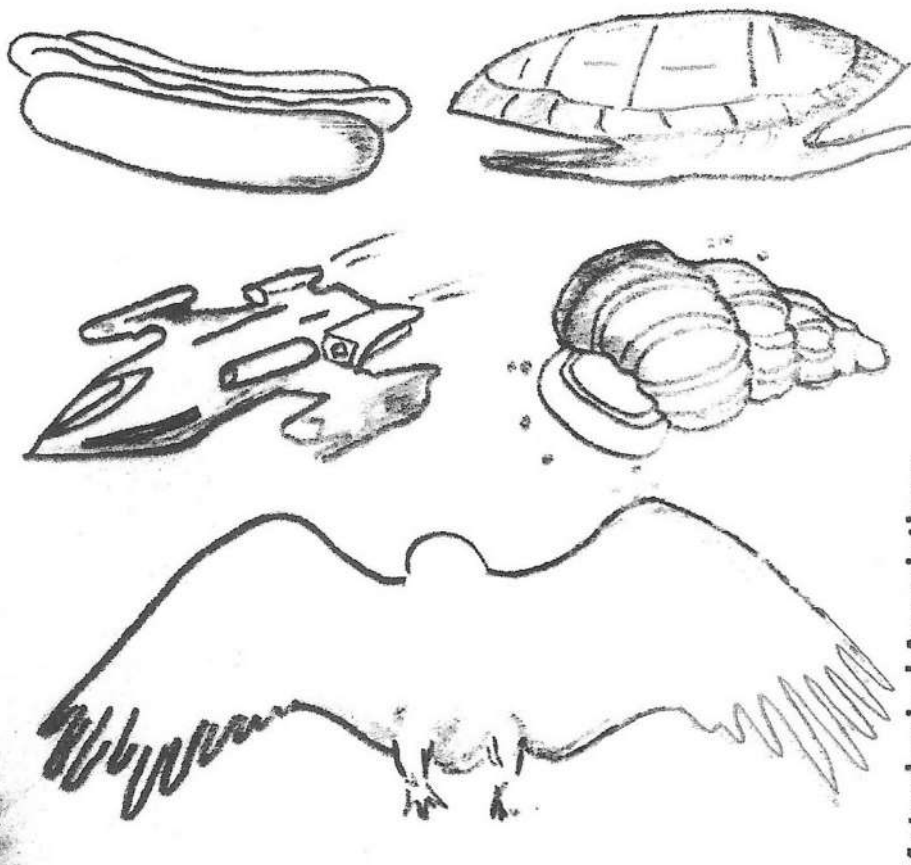






Metro Dubai

Metro Station



Metaphorical Associations

Movement – Adventure – Connection – Strength – Future

Appendix D

List of Publications and Conferences

The following is a complete list of all attended conferences, in which the researcher was accepted to present a paper. All papers were extracted from the dissertation with adaptations to fit the criteria of the different conferences.

- **EURAU 2014** "Composite Cities" *European Symposium on Research in Architecture and Urban Design*, held in Istanbul, Turkey between 12-15 November 2014. Paper title "Dubai: City Branding or Place Making?" Abstract published in print and digital forms in the conference catalogue titled, Composite Cities. Published in 2014 by European Symposium on Research Architecture and Urban Design. ISBN 978-975-561-451-9. Paper is also available through the following online link, https://www.academia.edu/9757037/Dubai_City_Branding_or_Place_Making
- **DAKAM ARCHDESIGN'15** "Current Trends in Architectural Design and Methodologies," held in Istanbul, Turkey between 6-8 July 2015. Paper title Dubai's Architectural Language: Play, Symbolism and Metaphors." Paper included in the conferences digital catalogue. Paper is also available through the following online link, https://www.academia.edu/13565249/DUBAI_S_ARCHITECTURAL_LANGUAGE_PLAY_SYMBOLISM_AND_METAPHORS
- **IASTE 2016** "Legitimizing Tradition" *International Association for the Study of Traditional Environments*, held in Kuwait City, Kuwait between 17-20 December 2016. Paper title "The Poetics of the Arabian Souq." Paper published in the 2016 *Working Paper Series of International Association for the Study of Traditional Environments – Traditional Dwellings and Settlements*. Volume 273. Publisher: University of California at Berkeley. Paper is also available through the following online link, https://www.academia.edu/35218750/THE_POETICS_OF_THE_ARABIAN_SOUC

- **AHRA 2017** “Architecture, Festival and the City” *Architectural Humanities Research Association Conference*, held at the School of Architecture and Design in Birmingham City University, Birmingham, UK, between 16-18 November 2017. Paper “Festival, Ritual, and Rhetoric of the Arabian Market Street.” The paper was accepted for inclusion in the conference’s book, *Architecture, Festival and the City*, which was published by Taylor & Francis in November 2018. Paper is also available through the following online link, https://www.academia.edu/35218643/Festival_Ritual_and_Rhetoric_of_the_Arabian_Market_Street